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*international
film review*

INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

of the International Catholic Cinema Office (O. C. I. C.)

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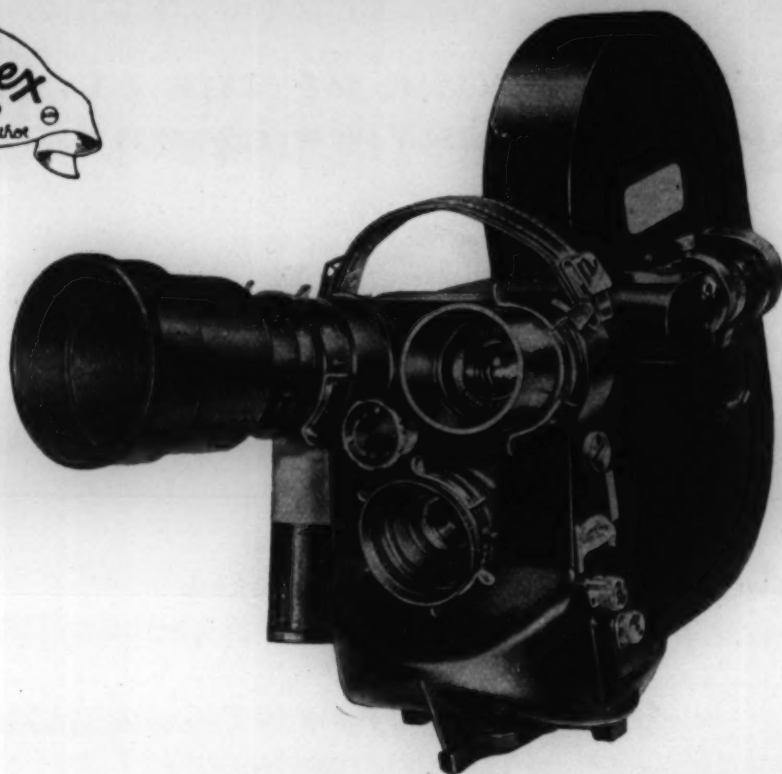
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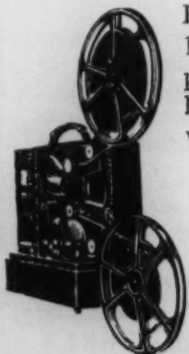
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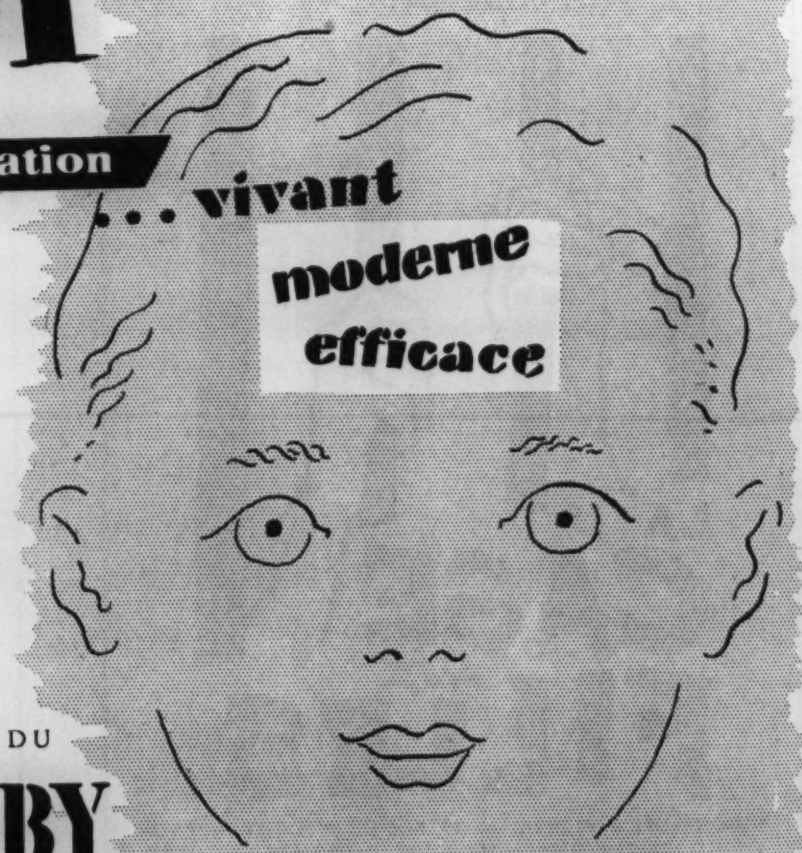
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INTERNATIONAL FILM REVIEW

NUMBER 4

1949

YEAR 1

Catholics and the Industry of Film

The important document of which we publish the text hereafter was addressed to the President of the O. C. I. C.

It constitutes the official attitude expressed by the Secretariat of State of the Vatican towards the subject chosen for discussion at the recent meeting of the General Council of the O. C. I. C. in London.

SECRETARIAT
OF STATE OF HIS HOLINESS
No. 206190

The Vatican, July 9th, 1949.

Mr. President,

You have been kind enough to put before me the subject for discussion at the next meeting of the General Council of the O. C. I. C. which is shortly to be held in London: **THE ATTITUDE OF CATHOLICS WITH REGARD TO THE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ASPECTS OF THE CINEMA.** I have read the pages of your short memorandum with great interest and, since you have been good enough to ask me for some directions or suggestions, it seems to me that two ideas deserve to be particularly stressed. The first, quite a general matter, is that what constitutes the power and prestige of Catholics called upon to pronounce judgement on the moral value of films — a sphere where deviations are so easy and sometimes so tempting — is their perfect **DISINTERESTEDNESS**. They should make this an absolute rule and remember that whatever the extent of the sums which pass through their hands — the employment of which is not only legitimate but indispensable for the launching and completing of good films — the Gospel maxim «Blessed are the poor» applies to this sphere of action as to every other, and the putting of it into practice — here as elsewhere — should be a sign which distinguishes the true disciples of the Gospel. Moreover, it is a principle which has always inspired the activities of the members of the O. C. I. C. and which will continue to be their strength in the future as it was in the past.

My second remark is more especially concerned with the direct action exercised by the O. C. I. C. and the National Centres by way of propaganda and influence: it must be resolutely inspired by the confidence that putting «Seek ye first the Kingdom of God» into practice will secure its good effect, even in the economic and social field. Moral classification of films, made authoritatively by the national centres, must have an effect on the attendance of spectators: diminish it, if it is a case of the condemnation of a bad film; increase it, if it is a case of a film recommended for its moral and artistic qualities. Indirectly the actual production of films is thus affected. There is never occasion to come to terms with certain tendencies to allow the economic aspect to prevail at the expense of the strictness of the judgement passed on a film from the point of view of Catholic morals. And those who are responsible for making these classifications should be the first to have faith that the education of the cinema-going public is possible and that fidelity in making no concessions when morality is at stake can and ought to have its reward sooner or later, even by results in the economic order.

That is what I have to say to you, Mr. President, on the eve of your meetings in London, and I think I can assure you that these ideas reflect the mind of the Holy Father, whose goodwill towards your worthy organization you know. He follows your work with a paternal interest and blesses with all his heart those who are going to take part in the next session of your General Council.

It only remains for me to express my very best personal wishes for the success of these days of work, and to beg you to accept, with these wishes, the assurance of my wholehearted and faithful devotion in Our Lord.

J. B. MONTINI
Under-Secretary.

Mr. John Bernard
President of the OCIC — Brussels

APPEAL OF THE O.C.I.C.

TO THE DIRECTORS OF THE FILM INDUSTRY

The General Council of the International Catholic Cinema Office, met in conference in London, July 17th - 20th 1949, having examined the economic aspect of Catholic activities with regard to the cinema,

and having noted the ever-increasing importance of cinema in the cultural and moral formation of the great masses of the population;

the material and spiritual distress in which the majority of our contemporaries find themselves, particularly in those countries devastated by war;

the necessity of coming to their assistance at all levels in order to help them to recover their equilibrium and to avoid having them succumb to the subversive propaganda of materialistic totalitarianism;

- and taking into consideration the fact that, in this struggle for the moral and material well-being of humanity, a particularly heavy responsibility weighs upon those who make and distribute the films which feed the cinemas of the five continents;

that under the pretext of the unlimited freedom of the artist, certain films inflict upon the masses an extremely decadent view of life, one in which the dignity of the human person is lamentably derided;

that many other films encourage the public in the idea of a purely material happiness which in various ways, completely ignores the supernatural origin of man;

- makes a solemn appeal to the chiefs responsible for production in the great film-making centres of the free world, that they may sponsor the production of films which will minister to the social and spiritual needs of peoples menaced by the waves of atheistic materialism;

that they may introduce into their films a spirit which is truly Christian and not content themselves with a merely external moral formalism which so often serves but to camouflage tendencies which are, in fact, completely opposed to such a spirit;

that the cinema may become a real instrument for diversion and culture by providing the public with a taste for the good life and the courage to face its everyday difficulties;

- The General Council of the International Catholic Cinema Office hereby assures the professionals of the film world of its fullest collaboration in order to facilitate, within the bounds of possibility, the realisation of the policy suggested in the present appeal. A programme conceived along these lines will receive a welcome all over the world from Catholics who, in their various countries, are working for a better cinema.

They hold themselves at the disposition of the profession for the realisation of the objects thus outlined.

A FILM STAR AT UNESCO

Myrna Loy talks on the mission of the cinema

Those taking part in the Fourth General Conference of UNESCO at Paris in September 1949 had the agreeable surprise of listening to the voice of a celebrated film star, accredited to the American Delegation in the quality of expert.

Now there was nothing accidental about this speech, for the interest which Myrna Loy takes in the work of UNESCO is of long standing.

At the beginning of 1948 she was named President of a Liaison Committee charged with the task of studying cinema problems in connection with UNESCO.

Here are some of the more important passages from her speech at the plenary seance of the Conference:

"I would like to say a little about the suggestion for a film commission composed of specialists from international film organisations. It has been my privilege to talk with persons in the film industry in relation to UNESCO. There are many problems but they are not so difficult as many people think. I have a great deal of faith that these problems can be overcome. There seems to be a very general idea that UNESCO is difficult to interpret. It is my belief that it would not be difficult to interpret UNESCO once we had enlisted the interpreters. People in UNESCO have approached the problem of films with some trepidation because of the enormous responsibility which they have felt of UNESCO's task. Actually, as the Director General said in his message to the International Theatre in Zurich, men who have told the stories of great men are certainly able to tell the story of UNESCO." She also said:

"We are in the presence of 20th Century Man. We must have courage and must use the arts to tell

people what he is trying to do. Whenever I have discussed the UNESCO idea with film people, they have expressed great enthusiasm. I believe that enthusiasm can bring results.

Journalists often say that it is difficult to make a good man interesting, but I have noted that a very good man is very interesting. The way in which the stories about saints and martyrs persist through many years is an example of this. UNESCO is trying to express a new idea. It is a good idea; a constructive idea and while it is difficult to interpret, it has been done. The arts can dramatise greatness.

One of UNESCO's greatest objectives should be to investigate and combat the attraction that violence and destruction have for many people. Construction can also be interesting. Incidents in the life of Mahatma Ghandi, who was a very good man, were so graphic that they attracted the attention of the world. UNESCO has a similar problem in dramatising for the world its ideas related to the building of peace."

The day following this statement Myrna Loy spoke to the youth section of UNESCO, further developing her point of view on the role that the commercial cinema could and should play in propagating international understanding. It is interesting to note that the American artiste energetically opposed the theory according to which generous ideals and good lives were too dull to make good motion pictures.

According to her nothing could be more acceptable to the public than the story of a life devoted to a noble cause, granted of course, that the authors and directors knew how to extract the intrinsic dramatic interest from the subject.

In the course of a long interview which she was kind enough to grant us, Miss Loy cited as very characteristic of the reaction of many people in Europe whom she had met during her journeys, the fact that the role best remembered among the many she has played was that of the mother in BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES. This she modestly attributed to the very real interest aroused by the film rather than to her personal merit as an actress.

It is satisfactory to see among the leading members of the cinema industry an increasing awareness of their responsibilities.

A. R.

Vittorino VERONESE
*President General
Italian Catholic Action*

TOWARDS NEW USES FOR FILMS

It is unanimously admitted that the films possess today an all powerful charm and this because the development of psychological studies shows so many interesting aspects inherent in this incalculably attractive force. We have neglected this aspect of the power of the cinema for a long time; indeed unwittingly but effectively we may have used this means of influencing the mind of modern man but without due conscious consideration of moral foundations.

We therefore hail with joy the awakening of interest amongst those Catholics who are responsible for religious and educational as well as artistic and public affairs. They are preoccupied, quite rightly, with the powerful influence the films exercise on the morals of the individual and of the masses.

We are particularly happy to note in the vanguard of this movement certain Catholics who up to now have preserved an attitude of sterile indifference. Without telling the story of the beginnings of Catholic films we must emphasise with satisfaction the comforting development of that international movement the O.C.I.C. and hail with warm sympathy the "Revue Internationale du Cinema", sumptuously got up and competently edited. This review will soon be an effective instrument of cohesion for those who feel the need of films inspired by Christianity.

The present trend is, in fact, crucial for the future of the Christian cinema, for this battle has come to be an episode in the great struggle going on today between Christianity and the systems of life drawing their inspiration from the materialist ideology of Marxism.

Everyone knows how dangerous a weapon films can be in the hands of propagandists of the new religion and the advantage they reap by inserting it in their formidable totalitarian system as an instrument of penetration and propaganda.

In the western world, on the contrary, that is to say in the democratic countries, according to the principles of freedom, amusement is the predominant aim of the films, which reminds us of the observation of Mr. J. P. Mayer in his book "Sociology of the Film".

... when art is regarded as a diversion, the era, he says, is one of decadence, not only for society but for art itself. On the other hand when art has a spiritual character, ideologically, philosophically (in

the broadest meaning of these terms) the era has a sense of unity and the horizon is open to the flowering of art.

I do not know the philosophy inspiring this critic, but the observation is grounded seriously in the history of art. We need only to consider Greece and the Middle Ages to see this. The former, where art, society and the state were intimately bound together, showed the unifying expression of hellenic civilisation; the latter where the supernatural end of man and his dignity intersect shows the unifying expression of Christian civilisation.

Nowadays, the Soviet state alone, conformably to the totalitarian conception, has seized on films and made them an apt instrument for modeling consciences to its marxist doctrines. I would urge people to meditate on this tragic fact. On the other side of the Iron Curtain no modern discovery, no resource has been spared in educating the masses in the direction of an areligious and anti-christian way of life. For this end sentiments and ideas which exercise a powerful attraction on the natural plane such as heroism, the attraction of expansionism and patriotism are exploited.

This side of the Iron Curtain, on the other hand, one sees babbling away at the side of a few constructive films, negative films destructive of all human values. Thus the cinema considered only from the commercial point of view ends up by being indirectly the fifth column of Bolshevism, and this by its degrading morals weakening the individual character as well as demolishing the traditional and fundamental institutions of our civilisation.

The democratic states at the moment, following a principle of freedom falsely established intervene only when an act is only too clearly reprehensible and when the offense is against common morals. Then the public authorities merely play the part of policemen and this to breed respect of the law but with too much indulgence. As to the positive plane, they are simply not interested in the question.

Agreed we are opposed to a State cinema, but we have the duty of drawing the attention of truly democratic states to such an important problem. Does anyone think of developing constructive action by making and circulating good films on the grand scale? Private enterprise? But is private enterprise capable of solving such an important problem on the economic plane, however strong their resolution?

These questions which Catholics insistently ponder, urgently await a reply. There is perhaps still time to organise a vast plan of film renaissance, for there is a public which has not yet been corrupted and one which the films can either lose or save.

A propos of this, Italian Catholic Action, being preoccupied in safeguarding morality and fidelity to the Church, has tried an interesting experiment specially on the people of Southern Italy who are more threatened by Marxist propaganda. We have chosen an instrument capable of penetration and instruction which can reach the smallest places in the Appenines and relay the voice of Rome by reminding people of the salvific action of Church and Pope. We have had recourse to a travelling cinema filling three lorries, formerly ambulances. A 16 mm. projector was installed with a loud-speaker system for addressing the people and a phonograph system for the playing of records. Each lorry under the control of a young propagandist received several documentaries and the film PASTOR ANGELICUS.

The lorries went off and climbed roads to the most hidden villages to bring the knowledge of films to men, women and children who had never seen one before. The success was enormous and the propagandists helped by the trend of the film found an unexpected strength of argument. To hear the Pope speaking and to see him on the screen impressed thousands of spectators who came out into the public squares in spite of the rigours of winter. The thoughts expressed about the bounty of Christ had a persuasive

force which showed itself in moving instances and unexpected changes of heart.

This happy experiment caused us to change our happy-go-lucky gear for a more stable set up so that by springtime of this year three cinemas on wheels were put into action and are at the moment on tour, welcomed enthusiastically everywhere. The films they show are chosen with a view to offering an educational programme and to give the propagandist the opportunity of treating the public to fundamental problems of the religious and social renaissance.

This experiment gives brilliant confirmation of the possibilities, thanks to good films and a relay organisation which allows films to be brought to the furthest parts and by which we are able to bring to a great number of people a worthwhile means of education and instruction.

But the initiative of Italian Catholic Action is only a drop in the ocean. A great number of travelling cinemas are needed, as also are sufficient films and good location conditions. These demand great installation and exploitation expenses. But all this is set out here to make clearly known a vital necessity. Catholics the world over should put to themselves in a concrete fashion the problem of making and circulating on the widest scale inspiring Christian films. To find a solution the problem should be raised to the international level. The economic resources of the various countries, particularly when they are limited as they are in Italy, cannot suffice to solve such a weighty problem. *Vittorino Veronese*

Christianna BRAND

London

IS THE CINEMA FAIR TO

THE NOVELIST?

I think that, as a novelist, I should be fair to the cinema and ask first: Is it *possible* to be what we here call "fair"?

Because of the bad hashes that have in the past been made of well known books in their translation to the screen, we have rather a tendency these days to promote every novel chosen for adaptation, to the status of work of art: and anxiously to expect for it shocking maltreatment at the hands of apparently evilly-intentioned illiterates. This really is the most awful nonsense. There is lots of bad and shoddy work, we know: but the average script writer in this country

is at least as cultured and talented and appreciative as the average author and is certainly sincerely anxious to translate a book into its new form in the way that will least mortify those who have revered it in its old.

For what, in criticising the cinema, we don't sufficiently appreciate, is that it is a new form: and in achieving it, any book, every book, *must* undergo tremendous changes. Some of the reasons for this are obvious. A novelist starts out gaily, with no limitations to his genius but those of his own imagination: he has seventy or eighty thousand words in which to

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explain and discuss; his characters may be tall or short or fat or thin or beautiful or plain at his command: his backgrounds depend only upon the number of different places he has visited, or his daring in describing scenes he has never set eyes on.... Moreover, his overhead expenses are not great, his book may continue a financial snowball for ever: his potential reading public numbers millions, and of these he need please only a very few thousands to make a reasonable profit for himself and his publisher. The company producing a film of his work, on the other hand, must start off by investing large sums of money in it: this they must recoup in a comparatively short time, and they can do it only by satisfying the vast majority of a comparatively small public, a public, moreover, rigid with convention and taboo. They must compress his two or three hundred pages into an hour and a half of "showing time" and portray his heroes and heroines through a quite surprisingly limited choice of artists. Can he hold it against them, then, if they find themselves obliged to shed his more verbose and introspective characters, alter the appearance and personality of those that remain, and sacrifice the delights of a setting in furthest Kurdistan for scenes that can just as well be represented as having taken place on Brighton beach? The answer to it all is that the cinema *cannot* be absolutely true to the novel: and it is not "fair" on our part to expect that it should.

I suppose there are still, in this country, quite a few books bought solely for their advanced publicity value, which prove so impossible of faithful translation to the screen that they had better have been left alone. This is all wrong, of course; and there are books, too, which it is, in the real sense, a shame to "muck about with", books of a dignity and beauty too precious to admit of even the most well-intentioned interference. In these cases, the remedy is in the hands of author and public. If, as a member of the public, I love a book too much to see liberties taken with it, I can always stay away: as an author I can refuse to sell the rights of my book, or, if need or greed prevail, can sell them and just not go and see the film; meanwhile praying like mad that history will repeat itself. The thing that as writer or as cinema-goer I must *not* do, is to assume that the script writer has gone to all that trouble over altering the book, merely because he wanted to: he has done it because he could discover no simpler way of resolving an unsuitable book into a saleable film.

We must accept then that alterations are inevitable: all that the novelist can "in fairness" demand is that they should be made with skill and care and only where necessary. Such films as "HAMLET", "OLIVER TWIST", and "THE HISTORY OF Mr. POLLY" have recently shown that in this an enormous amount of loving work does go to the preservation of what is worth preserving. As to what is worth preserving, of course, novelist and adapter may

not entirely agree! In all the above cases, the script writers were presumably free from interference on that head, but I do think that if authors would be a little more humble, would take more trouble to understand the technique and complications involved and would approach the whole subject with a more open mind, a great deal could be done in collaboration with producers, directors and scriptwriters with benefit to all. While we still continue to fight like steers for strict adherence to an impossible text, it is not surprising if, at the bare announcement of our names, (and especially if we are *authoresses*) everyone responsible for the script disappears in a cloud of dust and little stones.

My own experience in having novels translated to the screen has been amusing and I think illuminating. In one case I wrote the script myself, and when I had done with it nobody could possibly have recognised the book. In the case of "GREEN FOR DANGER" — a film which so many people seem to have liked so much and remembered so well — I had no hand at all in the script. When I first saw the finished picture, I thought that it adhered very closely to the original. By the time I had seen it three times, I realised that not in one single particular had it remained unchanged. The part of the detective had been built up and built in and his new prominence in the story entirely slewed round the angle from which it was seen. The scene had been changed, the characters were fewer and in most cases not true to their original types, the plot had been considerably altered: and finally, listening carefully, I came to realise that not one single line of my dialogue remained. But — the whole thing had been done with such consummate skill, the spirit of the novel had been so faithfully caught and reproduced, that, as I say, I was myself at first deceived; and to this day I receive wide credit for the whole of a wonderful piece of work, of which not one iota is really my due!

To sum up, we may perhaps employ the comparison of a water colour painting which is to be transferred to canvas; a painting, let us say, of a landscape with figures in the foreground. The canvas of course demands reproduction in oils: and since the artist is not competent to do it, another is called in to make the transition. Dealing in a different medium, he is forced to use a different technique: the delicate colours and brush strokes are no longer telling, he must apply something bolder and stronger, he must sketch in the figures with a broader outline, block in trees and buildings which in the original were shown in detail, merely suggest a sky which the water-colourist had filled with sunset lights and dear little cotton-woolly clouds. The picture has changed entirely: what is important is that its spirit should be caught, that it should still be a landscape lit by a sunset sky, that the figures in the foreground should retain the quality of beauty or mystery or

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movement with which the artist invested them: that the pattern and colour and meaning of the picture should remain. It is not just a question of slickness, of technique; it is not work that can be done with the tongue in the cheek. It takes an artist to reproduce the work of another artist and keep at least the illusion that its essential values remain; and speaking for English novelists, I believe that we are most for-

tunate in that such artists abound and are employed by all our important film companies. Authors and public must face the fact that in translation to the screen a novel has got to change: let us be thankful that in this country producers, directors and script-writers alike are very much "on our side" in making the change.

Christianna Brand

F. A. MORLION, O. P.

THE DIRECTOR-SCENARIO WRITER CONTROVERSY:

ITALIAN EXPERIENCE IN A WORLD PROBLEM

My friend Rudolf Arnheim has found in his library — which he had to leave in Italy when antisemitic persecution forced him to leave for America — a copy of a work, long since out of print, which we published together with the help of Bela Balasz, Dekeukeleire, Seligman and others.

It is a large volume called „Filmkunst“ which, published at Antwerp in 1932, laid the foundations of a philosophy of the art of the cinema. Already at that date one of the chief problems, aggravated by the development of talking films, was this: which was entitled to be called the creator of a film, the director or the scenario-writer.

Since then the most profound discussions and studies have not succeeded in exhausting the controversy. That great postwar development, the Italian neo-realist school, has encouraged many journalists to spread the idea that the director "writes directly on to the film", the proof apparently being that the best works *OPEN CITY*, *PAISA*, *VIVERE IN PACE*, *SCIUSCIA*, *ANNI DIFFICILI*, *LADRI DI BICICLETTE*, are at bottom merely different aspects of reality translated into film, living pictures of everyday life in which the devices of plot and scenario are almost superfluous.

Far from establishing the supremacy of the director, Italian experience supplies, in a limited instance the *a posteriori* proof of the equal importance of director and scenario writer.

The philosophic concepts of director and scenario-writer.

A discussion readily becomes bitter if first principles are not defined, that is to say if one does not leave eloquence for philosophy. We refer, therefore, to the conclusions of an introductory article "Thomistic Philosophy Looks at the Cinema", which appeared in the first issue of this review in January 1949. There we proved that in the art of the cinema it is almost impossible to find, in its pure state, sensuous beauty that is of plastic or musical form which in the arts defined in those terms frequently exists without any explicit

content of ideas. *A fortiori*, the art of the cinema excludes intellectual beauty in its pure state, that is the beauty of the movement and composition of ideas which one finds in certain kinds of poetry and certain philosophic treatises. In the true art of the cinema, all beauty is expressive, that is to say it is the beauty which is created when a material form, visible or audible, goes beyond its own nature, becoming an instrument to express, that is make present in the mind of man, a spiritual reality superior in its essence to matter and independent of it. It is in terms of this philosophy of the aesthetically real, which is merely an application of Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysics, that we have set out — in other articles — a definition of the excellent in the art of the cinema: the external movement of pictures and sounds to express an inner movement of the human spirit.

Without making some effort to throw light upon the profound law governing the very essence of the art of the cinema, it will not be possible to arrive at a definition of the essentials of the part played by the director (in its widest sense as film-maker) and that played by the scenario-writer (in the wide sense of the word describing the author of the idea or of the adaptation of the preparatory phase of the scenario and the initial cutting). It is without any doubt the scenario-writer who in the first place chooses the inner movements, while the director's business is to direct the external movements which "make" the film.

Working on this distinction, the normal genesis of a film can briefly be outlined in six phases.

1. A man finds that all his high faculties — intelligence, imagination, and will are absorbed with an idea of high emotional content, which he sees as a story full of visual and auditory possibilities. A *film subject* has been born whose inner movement, the spirit which unites the whole, is a welldefined central theme.

2. Alone or with the help of collaborators, he defines the roles and the psychology of the different characters necessary for the working out of the struggles which will

allow of the affirmation, opposition and climax of the central theme. This is the treatment, the elaboration of the continuity of scenes which gives the film its essential structure.

3. The producers, consultants and various technicians having given their opinion as to what will be required from the spectacular, commercial and artistic points of view, the scenario writer, working alone or with a group, outlines the visual and sound content of each scene, giving an idea of the essential forms to be taken by the various means of expression used — the set, and the rhythm of pictures and sound. Side by side with these essential scenes, incidental scenes, either comic or dramatic, and exterior to the action, are created to throw the central theme into relief and at the same time, because of the variation, to give both the necessary "recreation" to the audience and a greater intensity to the dramatic unfolding of the central. This is the scenario rough.

4. A director has been chosen who of course has already played his part in the working out of the scenario and he, having chosen the principal actors (in agreement with the producers) will have modified certain scenes to give play to their particular capabilities. The director's first duty during the making of the film is to choose and control the visible and audible movement (that is the external movement) of the film.

5. At the same time, he directs the use of purely mechanical means, such as the camera, sets and groupings, light, sound, exterior scenes and expressive detail, and the rhythm, that is the time factor and the often varying speeds of the action.

6. During the making of the film it is inevitable that the director will find it necessary to invent gestures, new dialogue and scenes not envisaged in the scenario. Even when this liberty of invention is reduced to a minimum by the producers he is always free to interpret, cut down, elaborate or cut out a large number of scenes. Problems arise in the set which must be solved at the time they occur, without normally any intervention by either producer or scenario-writer. It is in this sense that it may be said that the director, who is above all responsible for the direction of the external movement of the film, is the creator of the whole. In poetry the external movement is of secondary importance. In the novel too, the analysis of internal feelings are often more lengthy than the narration of external events. In the theatre, the external movements of the actors and the expressive quality of the scenery and costumes are not so important as the movement of the dialogue and of the actors' thoughts and passions. But in the cinema the choice and the intensity of the external movement is without question equal to the importance of the choice of inner movement, and the director's importance is at least equal to that of the scenario-writer.

Nevertheless it is still true that the external movement must be created in terms of the inner movement and must express it. Lack of unity between the external and inner movements is the gravest defeat in a film and inevitably produces ugliness. The director's first duty is to submit wholeheartedly to the scenario-writer, to steep himself in the living unity of the central theme and translate it complete by all the means of expression at his command, and not to try to say anything else. Sometimes a director of genius manages to be his own scenario-writer, like Chaplin. Welles. Clair and some other authors of films which have become classics. But this is not absolutely ne-

cessary: it is enough if the director shows enthusiasm and understanding for his scenario-writers and often one sees indivisible teams of directors and scenario-writers such as Ford-Nichols, Capra-Riskin, Carné-Prévert, De Sica-Zavattini, Rossellini-Amidei etc.

There is a further requirement; in order that the director may produce good work, the scenario-writer must do so too. It is true that many directors have managed to make mediocre or even positively bad films from excellent scenarios; for instance *THE HELL OF JEALOUSY* recently made by the Argentine Soffini from Tolstoi's *KREUTZER SONATA*, almost a perfect scenario. But on the other hand it is obvious that even the best director cannot make a good film from a banal and superficial scenario. The example of this was *NOTORIOUS* where even the exceptionally fine sets and Hitchcock's excellent direction of the inimitable Bergman did not succeed in making a film of quality from an inferior scenario.

It may therefore be concluded that the work of the scenario-writer is at least as essential to the creation of good film as is the director's, and, in a certain sense, more important; exactly as the value of the inspiration of any literary work is more important than the style, syntax and grammar combined.

The Present Dearth of Scenarios.

No one can deny that the American school has reached a progressive maturity in the art of film-making, of using all the means of expression which are at the disposal of the cinema. Yet, no one denies that Hollywood productions have fallen in quality. The source of this decadence is to be found in the decadence of the scenario. Even the greatest directors often accept scenarios in which the external movement has lost its expressive function in regard to the inner movement. In many cases, the inner movement itself is childish. Let us see the result of this in different types of scenarios.

1. The easiest scenario, and the one most sure of commercial success is, generally speaking, one in which the external movement has an intensity of its own — as, for instance, the breathless pursuits in western or gangster films. John Ford, working to a Nichols scenario, was able to give the western a deep dramatic intensity in his masterpiece *STAGECOACH*. In *THE INFORMER* he transformed the gangster theme into one of the most profound tragedies of the mind, that of the discovered traitor. Again the scenario was by Nichols. In some other less well known films such as *MY DARLING CLEMENTINE* he maintains both style and depth; he does not reach the same level in *FORT APACHE*, both the films being without Nichols. He is nowhere near his best work in his last work *THE THREE GOD-FATHERS* where all the magic of his craft and the expressive details of the Arizona desert, of which he composes the accompaniment to his theme, are subjected to a naive story of three bandits whose hearts are touched by a foundling baby. In the same way it is only in the occasional realist gangster film such as *CRISS CROSS*, *CRY OF THE CITY*, both by Siodmak, *NAKED CITY* by Dassin and to a less extent in *THE STREET WITH NO NAME* by Keighley, that the present too perfect formula of a scenario with a surprise every ten minutes allows certain human moments to emerge.

The fault which is spreading in the English and French schools is the fatal predominance of the ill-prepared exter-





HOME OF THE BRAVE (O.C.I.C. Award at Knokke).

PLEA FOR RACIAL TOLERANCE

LOST BOUNDARIES (Prize for best scenario at Cannes).



nal happening over the almost completely neglected inner movement.

2. Another type of scenario where the external movement predominates but attains no real beauty, except where it is subordinate to the inner movement, is the musical. Here too America has formalised the rhythmic movements of dancers, skaters etc. in the innumerable musicals of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, or Sonia Henje, which are more or less tacked on to little love stories which have no bearing on the spectacular part of the film. Even Powell and Pressburger in *RED SHOES* were resigned simply to sandwich beautiful semirealist ballets in between the scenes which were supposed to express a complicated but artificial conflict in the mind of a dancer.

3. The comic scenario should be the poetry expressed in paradox, of external events as the obstacle which the material world presents to man. That comedy, which not only in Chaplin but in Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd, attained a powerful cinema intensity and unity of the inner and external movements, has almost disappeared in America. With the exception of one or two sequences of the Marx Brothers (especially filmic in the classic sequences of Harpo at the piano or harp) and certain scenes danced or imagined by Danny Kaye, the level has dropped to the empty wisecracking of Abbott and Costello. It seems that in France with Noël-Noël in *LES CASSEPIEDS* or *PARADE DU TEMPS PERDU*, with *ARMOIRE VOLANTE* and *LA VEUVE DE L'INNOCENT* and above all with Tati in *LE JOUR DE FETE*, the true comic film scenario is being reborn.

4. In the poetic scenario, the inner movement clearly dominates the external. But the poetry of the objects is not enough to create a film of real movement (Flaherty's beautiful lyrics *LOUISIANA STORY*, *THE MAN OF ARAN* and *NANOUK* are only long documentaries). Disney is perhaps alone in starting from a scenario which is clearly poetical in its irreality and he too, in his later works, like *MELODY TIME* and *THE THREE CABALLEROS* has succumbed to the easy temptation of a frenzied exterior movement which is no longer completely the expression of poetic feeling but partly a formula which serves to display a box of tricks.

5. Comedy is principally the opposing play of feelings and character, with the minimum of external happenings; by its nature it is more of the theatre than of the cinema. Even Capra, who made such masterpieces as *NEW YORK-MIAMI*, *MR. DEEDS GOES TO TOWN* and *MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON*, lowered the filmic quality of his style by increasing the dialogue in *MEET JOHN DOE* and *THE STATE OF THE UNION*. The French on the other hand, who used to make more racy conversation pieces (the pre-war vaudeville films) have discovered the more realist and filmic way of comedy, one of the best examples of which was the very filmic dramatic comedy *LA VIE EN ROSE* by J. Faurez.

6. Drama, like comedy, is the opposing play of feeling and character but is more filmic by nature, since more action is necessary to explain the psychology of the principal characters. Hollywood's great mistake is to have made the dramatic scenario superficial by its insistence on an automatic, often artificial, happy ending.

The French mistake, especially before the war, was of the same kind: the multiplication of artificial "eternal triangle" stories. This by no means exploits the variety and depth of human themes. The common error of all this type

of story is to consider man as a machine with feelings, an error which leads to the making of differing plots with the simple transposition of a few "stock types" into varying situations and artificial crises. It is in this field that commercialism has killed true dramatic inspiration. In the great majority of films made by such talented directors as Ford, Vidor, Mamoulian, Duvivier, Feyder, Pabst and others, it is the too superficial or even essentially false scenario which undoubtedly degrades the quality of the presentation. From bad psychology to melodrama is but one step, and the superficial sinks into the garishly vulgar.

7. Finally tragedy, which is the natural peak of all art, is also that of the art of the cinema. Psychological drama attains its true meaning when one begins to see that beyond good and evil is man, there is absolute good and superhuman evil, which rise above the realms of psychology into the mystic peaks of theology. Thus it is that Orson Welles has found himself compelled to the Greek conception of tragedy with black Fate pressing upon man's actions, and that Olivier has come to his full strength as a director in Shakespeare. But here too, weakness of the scenario has often produced false tragedy, that is to say the imposition of a superhuman dimension, of a symbolism of eternal things, which is rather thought out and calculated than realised in the vital and inexorable rhythm of man's efforts toward the infinite. The two most striking examples of false tragedy are Clouzot's *MANON* which falsified Prevost and Cayatte's *LES AMANTS DE VERONE* which falsified Shakespeare. In less measure, Ford's *THE FUGITIVE* and the Mexican Fernandez' *LA PERLA* and *ENAMORADA* failed to reach true ultrapsychological intensity of feeling because hieratic symbolism — even when helped by wonderful photography — is not enough to suggest the tragic contact of the human soul with God or with the devil.

It can be seen by this analysis that the problem is not one of direction, but of scenario, and it is the renaissance of scenario-writing which must decide the renaissance of the art of the cinema.

Lessons From Italian Neo-Realism.

The birth and development of the Italian neo-realist school takes on its full significance when it is seen as an attempt to solve this scenario problem with which the cinema is faced. The deep feeling aroused throughout the world by the work of the Italian post-war school can be summed up in three words: it is simple, humble, intense.

The chief mark of the new Italian school is simplicity, the renunciation of those tricks of external movement which, in most current productions, relay the inner movement. The great works of other schools are those of Blasetti-Zavattini: *FOUR STEPS IN THE CLOUDS*; Visconti: *OBSESSION*, *EARTHQUAKE*, Rossellini-Amidei: *OPEN CITY*, *PAISA*, *GERMANY YEAR ZERO* (the last with another scenario-writer); De Sica-Zavattini: *PORTA DI CIELO*, *SCIUSCIA*, *BICYCLE THIEVES*; Castellani-Tozzi-Brusatti: *SOTTO IL SOLE DI ROMA*; Latuada: especially *THE BANDIT* and *PITILESS*; Zampa: *VIVERE IN PACE* with a scenario by Susy d'Amico; *ANNI DIFFICILI* with a scenario by Amidei, and less in *ANGELINA*; Germi: *IL TESTIMONE*, *GIOVENTU PERDUTA*, and especially *IN NOME DELLA LEGGE*; Genina, especially in his

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film on Blessed Maria Goretti, CIELO SULLA PALUDE and some fragments of De Santis and Vergano.

It is interesting to notice that the best of the films mentioned have all been due, so far as the conception and writing of the scenario has been concerned, to the collaboration of several writers who, without being an actual group, work along the same lines: Amidei, Zavattini, Susy d'Amico, Fabbri, Felini and Pinelli.

Now each of the above films depends on an extremely simple scenario which, avoiding a multiplicity of external events with pursuits, surprises and theatrical coincidences, takes as its plot the essential factors of some aspect of post-war life. There is nothing in them of the western or the gangster film, and none of the superficial attraction of elaborate staging: it is not by accident but by their deep need for simplicity, that all these films have given prime importance in their settings to actual scenes outside the studio and to the use of non-professional actors who have not had to "act" but simply to be themselves in the film.

Italy's great success is due, in the first place, to the affirmation of this principle: that the cinema is not intended for the diversion of adults who want to be amused like children, but to rouse the emotions by bringing people into contact with the realities of life which they so often see without experiencing, without grasping and without understanding.

This is the great revolution against the complex devices and banality of the American scenario, and the too involved formalism of the French and others whose only aim is the play of light and shade, rhythm and montage.

But behind Italian simplicity there is a more profound state of mind: humility. All the films quoted have as their subject the common man, the man who is neither too rich nor too poor, who is no saint nor yet a monster, who does not flaunt his happiness in the teeth of creation, but on the other hand does not sink into bottomless despair. All external movement in these films is used humbly to express an inner movement of minds. But the inner movement itself conforms sincerely, simply and humbly to the average feelings of the man in the street and does not try to go outside its own limitations into melodrama or false tragedy. The basis of the success of Italian neo-realism is the renaissance of that eternal marvel which is Latin classicism: moderation, balance, harmony. Compare VIVERE IN PACE by Zampa-Amidei, the comic force of which is terrific, with the films of the actor Macario, already famous in Europe, of which only a few scenes of COME PERSI LA GUERRA really live, or the actor Toto, whose only original scenes are a few from FIFA E ARENA and the end of POMPIERI DI VIGGIU, or the actor Taranto in SCIOPERO DEI MILLIONI where everything is flat and artificial. The difference is in the balance between the comic exterior appearance and the inner feeling, the interplay of Christian virtue and human weakness in the thought processes of the chief character. The same is true of SOTTO IL SOLE DI ROMA, ANNI DIFFICILI and especially of UNO TRA LA FOLLA by Tellini and IL MONDO E COSI by Bianchi Zavattini.

Compare OBSESSION, FOUR STEPS IN THE CLOUDS and BICYCLE THIEVES with the melodramatic exaggeration of Pastina's VANITA or Vayda Sarazani's VOCE DEL SANGUE films which should never be sent abroad; it is a comparison of feeling against

the distortion of feeling, a harmony of controlled emotion against the din of frantic jazz.

Compare OPEN CITY with O SOLE MIO by Gentiluomo-Amendola, or several other *Resistance* films — it is reality against unreality, the authentic against the "phoney", the balance of truth against the artificial recipe of so much fear, so much heroism, so much each of music, love, pursuit and sex-appeal.

The fruit of artistic simplicity, of the purification of all superfluous exterior complications and of humility which compels absolute sincerity, is intensity. The Italian neo-realist school would never have achieved the place it now holds in the world if it had not deeply affected men's hearts by its inner intensity. The intensity of a work of the cinema is the profound emotion which takes hold of the spectator when the words of the film become part of his life and the scenes set into poetic rhythm by their creator are tuned to the rhythm of the human heart.

Castellani, in his masterpiece SOTTO IL SOLE DI ROMA, achieves this intensity very often in his story of young people, especially the two unforgettable passages of the decent fiancée's revenge on the blozy hoyden who hooked herself on to her future husband, and that in which the mute but eloquent reproach of the same Iris which succeeds in recalling Mario to a sense of his responsibilities as a man in the very middle of a nocturnal raid.

Zampa-Susy d'Amico reach it in their scene of the drunken American and negro and especially in the last scene of the death of the peasant who has hidden them and pays for his brotherly humanity with his life. No superfluous dialogue, no formalised montage, simply the whole summed up in one speech which explains everything: "Why did I do it? Because I'm a Christian." De Sica-Zavattini in THE BICYCLE THIEVES builds up a series of delicate psychological touches which culminate in an atmosphere of fine and deeply human emotion in the last scene where the poor wretch whose bicycle has been stolen, or rather his very hope of escaping unemployment and poverty, finds himself alone in the face of a society which is hard but yet includes many good people, with nothing left but the twisting little hand of his son in his own big rough hand, and the pure look of a child which nothing can overcome. Rossellini in his marvellous sketches of the drama of post-war everyday life has achieved an intensity worthy of the classics.

At the root of the realist drama of everyday life which the Italian school has discovered how to express so simply, so humbly and so intensely, there is the irresistible appeal of that tragic depth of questioning which carries us to the fringes of the eternal. Realism cannot stop at human reality, but even without wishing to, touches divine reality. It was necessary, therefore, that the Italian school should face the problem of Christian tragedy, for Italy has a two-thousand year old instinctive understanding of divine movements in human history. Rossellini has understood the problem in his new film with Ingrid Bergman GOD'S EARTH and Amidei, with the young director Emmer, has attempted the tragedy of sacerdotal grace at war with the most concrete of the passions, that of the eternal feminine. Another group is attacking the problems of the struggle between religious vocation and a deadly hatred for a loved one's murderer. We do not know what result the Italian school may achieve in this final phase of its evolution towards full development, but we know that

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the impetus is irresistible and that the Italian school will end as a school of tragedy — or it will disappear.

All this gestation, as we know from experience, takes place in the birth of the subject, the development of the treatment, the perfecting of the rough, that is in the happy or difficult birth of the scenario. The great classics of the Italian neorealist school which appear to dispense with a scenario in expressing human reality, have really succeeded because of the perfection of their scenarios. De Sica and Zavattini worked for a month without rest on the scenario of *BICYCLE THIEVES*. Amidei showed me the scenario of *OPEN CITY* and *ANNI DIFFICILI* in which everything down to the lightest shade was foreseen. The great films were thought out and written in all their perfection before they were acted, shot and shown in their proper rhythm. Cinema art of tomorrow — which is already being heralded as the concentration of great literature, great painting, great music and of all the arts together — will

be first and foremost the work of great scenario writers closely linked with great directors. It was, therefore, with deep conviction that the Pro Deo University, three years ago thought of founding in the very heart of Christendom the first cinema faculty, with the aim of fostering intellectual collaboration and creation in the world of film. The great directors and scenario writers whom we have mentioned are its chief professors, and the future of production will depend in part on their efforts to create disciples, continuers of the work, in this atmosphere of living and original research.

Italy's experience proves that it is not perfect craftsmanship but the perception and creative spirit which in the last analysis is the deciding factor; we shall see whether Christians are or are not capable of great creative effect, of participation in the truly divine power which manifests itself in the sights and sounds of our troubled world.

F. A. Morlion, O. P.

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Faith and Religious Films

Our age lacks feeling for religion. That is why we are no longer set afire by works of art. Yet if our age lacks this sensitivity, the need for it is nevertheless still within us, stifled though it be. Society has always felt the need of religious men, be they poets, musicians, philosophers, ascetics or even film makers. The proof of this is in the widespread enthusiasm of millions of people for the few, rare film productions of religious inspiration.

The greatest misfortune of modern times is that men lack, not so much deep religious feeling, the privilege of some chosen souls, but the more personal feeling for religion which they would experience from an occasional hour of recollection, an hour during which there would be truly reconciled all those little disparate elements which the spirit of today possesses, separate within man himself, like the citizens of a state divided by anarchy.

Our minds today are too much a prey to ardent individualism like a state plunged in corruption and ruin, and it would seem that religion and meditation have no place in the world, save for the man who has the courage — or the opportunity — to renounce his worldly occupation.

Now, to exclude to some extent philosophic problems, within the sphere of the cinema which alone interests us at the moment, we must clearly emphasise the complete absence of any religious feeling (with a

few rare exceptions) in film production past and present, devoted exclusively as it is to the portrayal of the exterior world and its customary experiences, joys and pleasures.

The ideal of modern life, projected day by day on tens of thousands of cinema screens, is represented by the struggle against difficulties, by the success, in a word, of the materialistic way of life. What does it matter if this success is achieved, as it actually is in this bitter struggle, at the cost of much interior failure and at the cost of the more precious and active elements of the soul.

Sensual desire, the titillation of the senses, the sordid coarsening of womanhood on the screen, the mercenary activities of the politician, the degradation of music to jazz, the glorification of violence, the thirst for vengeance, everything in a word, which is discordant, over-individualistic and corrupt (the terms are synonymous) is daily exalted by the cinemas.

Arrogantly rationalist or shamelessly materialist, and therefore crudely sensual, such today is the life of modern man. This is the prototype — for millions of copies, offered for the unstinted admiration of a simple and impressionable public. And when an artist decides to leave the beaten track and to produce a religious film, a film which really appeals to the heart and not merely to the eyes of the spectators . . . what an unfortunate production it is. The proof of

this is to be found in the story of religious films (Religious Pictures) produced and distributed by Hollywood.

If a man is not a believer he cannot create a work sincerely and profoundly Christian. Faith alone is fitted by its very nature to enlighten the dreams and visions of artists. Consider the Middle Ages, when the greatest genius of that period conceived the world as an idea of God given substance by the Word, because they perceived hidden within every human creature, within every created thing, a divine idea. To these sublime visionaries the world was a huge book written by the hand of God in mysterious characters, the intimate meaning of which they, the artists, must interpret for the unlettered masses.

To these men we are indebted for the masterpieces of art with today enrich the Churches and the museums of the world; but we also owe it all to the Faith that was within them, that mysterious creative and transforming power which according to Holy Writ "moves mountains", whose roots are nurtured in sensibility. It may justly be said that any truly religious work of art is the aesthetic expression of an Act of Faith in Christ, Our Lady or the Saints.

It often happens now-a-days that a humble soul kneeling in front of a sacred statue feels that he cannot pray. He does not understand the reason why, but that does not lessen the value of the sincere impression, often attributed by the discerning critic as a condemnation of the work of art, since it does not achieve its aim. In fact such work betrays in the artist a vain attempt at religion, an attempt to evoke

an emotion which he himself does not share and which therefore he has not been able to communicate to others. In this case the lack of moral sincerity in the artist nearly always determines the artistic failure of his work.

The same thing happens in the film world in connection with religious films, in the case of Catholic films produced by Protestants, directed and acted by people with no religious convictions.

There will never be Catholic art in the cinema without a vigorous Faith shared alike by artists, authors and producers, and without that Faith we shall never have the films which the masses need particularly now-a-days in order to nourish their own faith.

Reasons for the Faith are discovered with difficulty by leading a life of solitary contemplation or by indulging in theological controversies. Theologians will never change men's hearts but saints can, and even artists, for they know how to pluck the cords of the human heart.

That is why we shall always welcome a Catholic cinema, where Catholics, artists and technicians may share effectively in the creation and the production of works illumined by that Faith which draws countless souls into its light.

What matter then if our age lacks deep religious feeling; it does not lack men of good will who, if they have the Faith can create masterpieces — even for the cinema.

Professor Luigi Gedda

Marcello VAZIO

Film-critic "Il Quotidiano", Rome

Commercialism versus spiritual values

IN THE CATHOLIC CINEMA

Everyone will remember the reception given to *GOING MY WAY* when it was shown in Europe: approval was unanimous and the film's success was assured.

The reason for such success must be sought in the need felt by the majority of the more thoughtful members of the public for a film which, in the midst of so many negative, destructive or materialistic productions, would re-establish spiritual values and put religion, charity and the fear of God in their true position.

Arriving on the heels of the U. S. armies, the first American films, with their atmosphere of intimacy and mystery, often surrealist and frequently rich in supernatural elements, gave a measure of

assuagement to this public thirsting for light, and raised hopes of something to follow which would be less "material" and more deeply sincere.

This collective illusion was aided by the fact that the films were shown with their original dialogue, which seemed sometimes not only an untranslated resonance but also a mystical and perfect accompaniment, even though to our inexperienced ears its supple harmonies were quite incomprehensible. Films like *HERE COMES Mr. JORDAN*, *I MARRIED A WITCH* and *TOM, DICK AND HARRY*, which made use of numerous magical effects with the aid of cheap tricks of doubtful taste, augmented the illusion and seemed to open to us a really new world of the spirit. Disillusionment very soon followed and the public

grew tired of the awkward alliance between naivety and commercialism. At this moment came the triumphant entrance of GOING MY WAY.

At first sight the film seemed essentially Catholic. Only later did the *Osservatore Romano* speak, in a review, of unconscious Catholic propaganda. Still later, the *Rivista del Cinematografo*, organ of the Catholic Film Centre, accused GOING MY WAY and other films from across the Atlantic of being falsely presented as Catholic.

Such is the history of the brief but glorious course of the "commercial" Catholic film. We should not have re-opened the discussion to-day had it not been for the appearance at the Venice Festival of the new French film about the Curé d'Ars, LE SORCIER DU CIEL, which calls for comparison and, moreover, a measure of retrospective retraction. We are faced with a new type of Catholic film which could be described as "spiritual", and which numbers THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM, THE SONG OF BERNADETTE and MONSIEUR VINCENT amongst its greatest successes.

GOING MY WAY's main claim to applause lay in its rhythmical element. As a musical production it was faultless, a built up harmony of which the separate parts called for more careful handling than the theme itself. Perhaps this theme had not been very carefully worked out: certainly it did not rise above the usual battle, so often witnessed before, between new and old, between conservative rigidity and creative urge. The contrast, more comical than profound, between the young priest and the old, provided the main interest, and it was admirably presented by the director and his actors. But although these differences are well brought out by clever and detailed touches, neither in GOING MY WAY nor in its immediate successor, THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S, has the existence of a Primary Good been successfully demonstrated. These films were effective and moving and, in spite of themselves, managed to teach a lesson, for the rather childish emotions they aroused led easily to an easy pity and love of one's neighbour. But one thing was lacking: the sincerity of faith. The good works of the young curate and the Reverend Mother are too superficial to allow the conclusion that their basis is a solid Faith. They are not "bearers of light": they give no sign of their inspiration. They pass uncorrupted through difficulties, dangers, temptations, thanks more to a kind of light-hearted optimism, which is very American, than to the grace which is the mainstay of God's friends. They are, in short, nice, beneficent people, but they lack the missionary's fire.

In view of the attitude of the Catholic cinema press, the producers, noting the public's enthusiastic reception of religious themes and also their demand for films which appeal to the heart as well as to the eyes, turned to this new type of film, and enlisted the collaboration of famous artists believers who brought conviction to their work. Thus were made THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM, THE SONG OF BERNADETTE, MONSIEUR VINCENT and, more recently, LE SORCIER DU CIEL.

These films have been applauded: what is more, their message has been "felt". For the surest sign of the value of a film from the religious aspect is its ability to make the spectator turn to prayer and to raise him to its own spiritual level. The Venetian audience's applause for LE SORCIER DU CIEL, which was shown "hors concours", having already been seen at Locarno, was quite spontaneous. Such applause is a most effective proof of our contention.

This Marcel Blistène production is, too, a cheering sign that a series of films of religious inspiration is being prepared; films which are more preoccupied with the spiritual problems left by the war than with the commercial considerations which initially influenced producer-director Leo McCarey.

But we may ask whether American films such as those of McCarey, who is making a new *Crosby* film, primarily commercial in character as they are, may not do harm to the cause of Catholicism? Might not the habit of seeing optimistic, shallow trifles, of making fun of the humbler aspects of the apostolate, in time undermine the respect due to the ministers of God? Rather than hazard a guess as to the answer to such questions, I think it preferable to stress the usefulness of these films in comparison with so many productions that are either completely amoral or, seemingly neutral, are secretly corroded by a sadistic outlook on life.

Let us, therefore, welcome a new film of the type of GOING MY WAY, since experience has shown how useful a lesson such a film can teach... but what is needed above all is a film that is clearly and sincerely spiritual. This is what we want, as Catholics and also simply as cinema-goers.

Consider, for example, the deep impression made on the sceptical and exacting Venice audiences by LE SORCIER DU CIEL, in spite of its many artistic defects. The warmth of their welcome was due to the fact that, technical considerations apart, the film represented a really sincere declaration of Faith. It is a song of Faith, composed against a profoundly human background and carried out in a succession of moving sequences, which guides to conviction and certitude: the Curé d'Ars, who draws strength for his immense apostolate from hostile and confused surroundings; the inn-keeper, who becomes gentler as understanding dawns; and, finally, the atheist cobbler whose slow passage towards the truth is in itself, by implication, a hymn to God. These characters are as the harmonious notes of a perfect symphony or the invisible threads of a warp. For the spectator they are not imaginary characters: they are historical figures who have been brought to life again by the director; no longer the creations of the imagination of a clever writer, but living witnesses to an eternal Creed. Even the technical faults (overemphasis on certain minor characters, trick photography to suggest the presence of Satan, etc.) do not destroy the harmony of the film; rather do they help it by underlining even more strongly the psychological contrasts. And willingly do we forget them in face of so much talent put to the service of a message of goodness and consolation.

Eitel MONACO

*President of "L'Associazione Nazionale
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THE PROGRESS OF THE ITALIAN CINEMA

The year 1949 marks for the Italian Cinema, a new phase of expansion and development.

For the third time in fifteen years, its economic development shows a progressive improvement. The two earlier dates were 1910, when the Italian silent film began to sell on the world's greatest markets, and 1935 when protective legislation first came into force.

The estimate of the cinema given here treats it from the point of view of the economic aspect of production. This is measured according to the length of film produced, the amount of money invested, the rate of export. It is concerned then with the industrial development, which of course by itself, does not determine the qualitative progress of production, but which is certainly the indispensable basis of the art of the cinema, if it is to be both serious and popular. It is true that a good film can be produced, by an industry of limited dimensions and for a limited economic market. But that is a rare phenomenon, which constant technical progress makes more difficult in that it demands installations and machinery, which grow ever more complex and more costly.

The Italian cinema industry is then once more in good trim, the studios are working to their fullest extent, equipment is being rapidly constructed and improved. Strikes of artists, technicians, and other workers, have almost completely disappeared. The actual rate of work is fixed upon the basis of the annual production of ninety ordinary films, 150 documentaries and about 200 news-reels.

On the plane of international competition this favourable situation is due to the very low level of the total cost of production. From the artistic point of view, the credit is due to the efforts of the Italian directors, technicians and producers. This is especially true of the period after the war, when the destruction of installations and financial difficulties led to the making of films, which by the simplicity of their style, by their fidelity to the realities of life, and by their deepening approach to social questions, aroused a special interest in the public of all countries. To these factors, due to intelligent handling, are to be added the natural advantages of climate, scenery and the high professional level of our technicians and artists.

The results obtained to date are the more remarkable when one considers that no restriction is placed upon the importing and circulation of foreign films in Italy. Alone amongst the producing countries, Italy has given a courageous example of the "liberalisation" of film exchanges, so that within the last three years, 500 films have been imported from all sources.

The film in Italy is thus beginning to pass from the phase of being a home industry to the level of an international industry. Already many films have been produced in Italy in collaboration with France, England, the United States of America and Argentina, and others are under consideration or in preparation.

International collaboration has been facilitated by a series of agreements concluded by Government departments and different Italian professional associations with numerous countries. Naturally, in spite of the good general situation and the favourable prospects for the future, perplexities and worries are not lacking. Like all organisations that have gone through a phase of rapid development, the Italian film organisation presents certain anomalies. The improvisation and the fragmentary character of much of the initiative, the lack of co-ordination, the rise of certain marginal activities with a view simply to speculation, these defects exist, but it will not be difficult to eliminate them gradually. Certain associations have already acquired a greater degree of stability and are studying a system of auto-selection which aims at separating the speculators from the organisations which have the necessary equipment, both financial and administrative.

It cannot be denied that isolated producers have sometimes abused the liberty they possess, but there is a growing sense of responsibility in the industry which takes into account the increasing influence of the cinema, on behaviour, social relationships and on various aspects of the life of individuals and of groups. This evolution, without external pressure, will be more rapid and more efficacious if those who have a clear view of the influence of the cinema on the lowering or raising of the moral level of society, abandon a negative critical position and enter more closely into the life of the cinema itself.

The relationship between the State and the cinema is today regulated by laws and institutions which give

great hopes for the future. Italian legislation is in the course of being perfected, it leaves full liberty in the economic sphere to private initiative, simply creating the conditions which, in matters of finance and organisation facilitate the development of the industry. As far as Italy is concerned, it cannot be said that the cinema is State-controlled or subsidised. The State leaves private initiative entirely free and offers it the means. It offers facilities in the matter of credit,

partial remission of taxation, and places at the disposal of the industry certain Government establishments (Cinecitta), and a cinema circuit (E.N.I.C.)

Artists and industrialists of the cinema will be flocking to Rome during the Jubilee year. They will be able to see for themselves the degree of development attained by the Italian cinema.

Eitel Monaco

Turi VASILE

Editor in Chief: *Revista del Cinematografo*

Is the Italian Cinema "Neo-Realist"?

Italian film productions have had a great welcome during these last years, both from people abroad as well as from Italians. From Rossellini's *ROMA CITTA APERTA* to Germi's *IN NOME DELLA LEGGE*, we have had a series of impressive present day films. Told in a simple manner, approximating at times to the documentary style, their effect has derived from the fact that they have been able to draw deeply from the facts of recent history, human stories bordering on the great historical and social events of the present time, often, indeed, transfiguring that history thanks to the perfection of its artistic expression. As a result people are in the habit of speaking, and foreign critics in particular, about the *neo-realism of the Italian cinema* and of the *Italian neo-realistic school*. This growing insistence on the signs of a new life and spirit in the Italian films flows from the fatigue aroused by the trashy and unenterprising themes and methods of the more powerful world film markets.

We recall the admiration of the European and American critics for *PAISA*, *SCIUSCIA* and *VIVERE IN PACE* when they were presented by Italy at the Brussels Film Festival in June 1947. They spoke then of Italian neo-realism as the most surprising feature of the Festival — a surprise the more unexpected in that the films were from a country where the cinema had not had hitherto — if we are to be frank — much reputation for truth or sincerity. It appeared to us at the time that in the warmth of their sympathy our foreign colleagues were failing to draw a sufficiently precise distinction between the intrinsic value of the films themselves. It seemed that the definition of neo-realism was in fact a little hasty and vague. We feared that the definition itself would have (as indeed it has in part) a deadening influence

on the Italian film makers themselves, with the result that there would actually grow up a school of neo-realism, a formula which in a short time would sicken by repetition, fall into insincerity and finally reach decadence. This fear was reinforced by the fact that foreigners seemed to be enchanted (unpardonably so in the case of critics) by a certain shallow publicity which looked at life through folkloric spectacles, and that in a country so lately ravaged by the brutal reality of war. We have said enchanted, but we might have said moved by curiosity, judging by the periodicals which deal with artistic expressions such as ballet and folk-song and which strike the foreigner at once because of their bizarre, unusual character.

We thought "When all is ended, when the stories of refugees, of ruins, of humiliations and oppression will be no more than an unpleasant memory, when the drama of innocent children led astray by the moral upset of war, when life in the country will no longer present the untended appearance characteristic at a time of invasion and a lost war, will our cinema lose all interest in film and obstinately repeat the formulas which have contributed to its present temporary success?"

In this connection the example of the French Realists was quoted, which was, it was said, little more than a question of style; or that of the oriental cinema which contented itself with minute and frigidly presented episodes from life, of conflicts, all with a political purpose which destroyed all aesthetic value.

We were astonished by the fact that foreign critics bracketed together as neo-realist three such films as *PAISA*, *SCIUSCIA* and *VIVERE IN PACE* without discerning beneath the apparent similarities their profound diversity. While the first demonstrated,

especially in the episode in the marches, to what dramatic heights the documentary can be lifted, the second made use of a polemic which resulted in rhetoric, while the third limited itself to the superficial recounting of an interesting actual story.

This reluctance to distinguish, this insistence on investing all Italian films with the title "neo-realist" has spread more and more so that even the ordinary public in Italy now accept the definition. Today, who says neo-realist school says Italian films.

Fortunately, after little more than two years, the Italian cinema is able to show that its vitality and its power comes not from an excess of actuality or the formulas of neo-realism — if it ever existed apart from the generalisations of the critics — and is, indeed, surpassing itself. This fact is doubly pleasing from the Catholic point of view for we see both an artistic and spiritual development. Neo-realism, in its caricature, went to extremes which bore no relation to truth; it continued to picture daily existence which lacked all objective verisimilitude with its everlasting vileness and indelicacies, its emphasising of the seamy side of life. We have the impression today that the Italian cinema is now ready for a new flight of which the first stages were, together with other pre-war films: *QUATTRO PASSE FRA LE NUVOLE* (Four Steps In The Clouds) by Blasetti and *I BAMBINI CI GUARDANO* by De Sica (The Children Are Looking At Us). If this is to continue it will be as much as to say that the success which attends our films is not an occasional accident but is the outcome of the creative effort of authentic artists.

Naturally we would expect to find ourselves today in one of the phases of a transition, an evolution, clearly recognisable in two recent films *LADRI DI BICICLETTA* (Bicycle Thieves) by De Sica and *IN NOME DELLA LEGGE* (In The Name Of The Law) by Pietro Germi.

LADRI DI BICICLETTA is, perhaps too typically romanesque — an unsatisfactory thing for those who feel that the *milieu* and the language prevent the film having the universal appeal it might otherwise evoke. Neo-realism produces a sketch, an outline, precisely observed round a likely but bitter little inci-

dent but this slender little story has enabled the director to introduce whatever he wished with the masterly and often most felicitous touch of the great artist. There is little of neo-realism save perhaps a certain complacency deriving from the fact that it is strong drama, violent, harsh and ingenuous, with a kind of romantic intimacy peeping out here and there.

In *IN NOME DELLA LEGGE*, on the other hand, the so-called neo-realism is put at the service of a story whose veracity — the fight against the Mafia and against banditry in general — comes to a more satisfactory conclusion, the necessity of the total re-establishment of law. No one can claim to be a law unto himself: there can be but one law, that administered by the State with the assistance of public opinion. This is the first Italian film which has had the courage to propose a moral solution to the problem envisaged — a spirit clearly contrary to the neo-realistic attitude which limits itself to the dramatic exposition of the problem.

The public in the peninsula have welcomed this film with exceptional warmth. Artistically the film is, perhaps, not inferior to the best of the Italian productions in so far as the story is concerned and the author shows proof of a great mastery of cinematographic style.

IL MULINO SUL PO (The Mill On The Po) by de Lattuada and *CIELO SULLA PALUDE* (Heaven On The Marshes) by Augusto Genina, both recently presented at Venice, are a further demonstration that the national cinema exists apart from any question of neo-realism, a continuing proof of felicity in expression and style, and an augury of good things to come.

The Italian neo-realist school does not exist. Perhaps it never has existed. There is an Italian cinema and certainly there are excellent Italian films. Our artists are evidence of a fecundity, of extraordinary fantasy with a remarkable capacity for representing the present day themes proposed to the cinema. They will thus be able to contribute to the spiritual betterment and moral elevation of humanity thanks to the power of persuasion and the veracity with which they are capable of investing their art.

Turi Vasile

A great film :

"HEAVEN ON THE MARSHES"

*„How I made the Film of **Maria Goretti**“*

by Augusto Genina

To make a religious film or a film inspired by religion is a very difficult undertaking.

Who says religious film says boring film. This is unfortunately only too often true. With few exceptions, religious films, even those produced under the best artistic and industrial conditions, that is to say with the help of the best brains and technical skill, have not had the success that was expected. The public have found them to be without spectacular appeal and they have been unable to fill the halls in which they have been shown. (The writer is here referring mainly to Italian cinemas. Eng. Ed.)

That is why when Bassoli proposed that I should make a film dealing with the life of MARIA GORETTI, the little peasant girl who preferred death to the sullyng of her body, I unhesitatingly refused.

With MARIA GORETTI, the enterprise was doubly difficult. It required that a film be constructed in two equally powerful and dominating elements: the earthly and the celestial, in the underworld and in paradise.

People have said to me that this conflict between the profane and the divine finds a place in every saintly life, but it is rarely that there is so evident a strife for domination of the one element over the other as is to be found in the case of MARIA GORETTI.

In telling the short and astonishing life of MARIA GORETTI in film one could either stress the black material side of the story or underline the luminous and divine. One could make a film according to the neo-realistic formula in vogue at the present time, pushing the extraordinary facts to their extreme limits, or perhaps in the spirit of those colourful films beloved of a public filled with the glamorous and false productions which were typical of certain pre-war films. Or one could make a film which was far removed from all these schools and tendencies, a film with the single aim, the sole preoccupation of bringing to life on the screen the poetic and innocent personality of the little Maria.

Such a film could be made in the very places which witnessed her short life and sudden death: the marshes which less than fifty years ago used to encircle Rome with a desert of mire and water.

But the problem is not for that easy of solution.

When Bassoli, that tenacious man, once more came to see me, he again proposed that I make the film and gave me to read before giving a definite answer the text of the process of beatification of MARIA GORETTI. He was wise to give me this text to read, for here, precisely, did I find the solution of the problem.

Lives of saints and of persons considered worthy of canonisation are usually told by second-rate writers who seem to lack all sense of reality. In the best of them one finds oneself faced with a fable, a beautiful and edifying fable, never a story which though partaking of material life and earthly ways reaches the divine.

In the process of beatification of MARIA GORETTI, on the contrary, I glimpsed the possibility of making this transition from earth to heaven. An ambitious programme, fraught with snares and dangers but, if successful, what a solid base from which to work!

That is why the prizes gained at Venice and particularly the O.C.I.C. Award, filled me with such great joy for they were an indication that I had attained the object which I had set myself: to make of the life of MARIA GORETTI a moving film capable of pleasing every public, a film which, making use of historical truth faithfully reported, could exhibit unadorned the picture of this martyr of whom one might say that it is hard to know whether she was too much a child or too much a woman.

One Critic's Opinion of **Cielo sulla palude**

by Gian-Luigi Rondi

Film critic on: "*Il Tempo*", Rome

At the beginning of this century when the grey expanse of the marshes, deadly and forbidding, still lay stagnant between Nettuno, Anzio and Terracina, a poor farm labourer's family, the Gorettis, settled there. Father, mother and their large family established themselves in an out of the way farm in the Agro. Luigi Serenelli, the farmer who engaged them, had a son Alessandro, a boy of sullen and violent character; the pitiless climate of the marshes, damp and bitter in winter, heavy and relaxing in summer, was as powerful an adversary of the souls as of the body. If they did not succumb to malaria, the men-folk rapidly fell a prey to vice, while the superhuman manual labour demanded of the women reduced them generally to the level of beasts of burden. Some few, however, helped by the Faith, managed to rise out of the slime, finding in heaven their strength and consolation. Among these was Maria, the eldest daughter of the Gorettis; busy at twelve years old with little domestic duties, she had no care but to avoid all stain of sin in her life. Her father who had resisted the attacks of vice, did not escape the fever; after his death, his family remained in the service of Serenelli and his son Alessandro, whose passion for Maria grew daily more violent and unhealthy. For months the child resisted his attempts at her seduction and even his offers of violence. But one unfortunate summer day, when everyone was at work in the fields, Alessandro caught Maria alone in the house; once again the little girl refused his persuasion and threats. Exasperated by Maria's resistance and realising that her will was unshakable, Alessandro lost all control and satisfied his fury by striking the child fourteen times. Taken to hospital at Nettuno, she died after two days of terrible agony, asking God's pardon for her murderer.

The whole countryside was touched. The newspapers became interested. Maria Goretti was called the St. Agnes of the century. People prayed to her, asked for her intercession; her grave was an acknowledged source of favours. This popular devotion received the Church's approval without difficulty and she was pronounced Blessed. In a few months the Pope will declare her a saint. But the cinema has not waited for her canonisation before bringing to the screen her pure, sad story. Augusto Genina's film CIELO SULLA PALUDE which

brought the Venice Festival to a close, tells it with scrupulous fidelity.

A delicate undertaking, full of difficulties and dangers — for what would have been easier than to fall into pious sentimentalism or licentiousness? But Genina has managed to avoid these pitfalls; his work is perfectly human and without theatricals. The picture of Maria Goretti which it paints is high, pure and noble. The light which she sheds is not the high gloss of a picture-postcard; her sanctity is still on the human plane, and is shown as much in her simple everyday life as in her sincere practice of the deep, spontaneous faith of a twelve-year-old. Around this central figure, which is not only true to life, but artistically acceptable, hangs the heavy background of the marshes, with their rains, their stagnant pools, their scant promise of life. And side by side with the products of this hateful atmosphere, men who work, become hardened, struggle, give in and die, there is the contrast of the "little flower" who found in heaven the strength of her purity. The director has captured this atmosphere, while adhering to historical fact, with an accuracy and vigour which we do not remember in Genina's former work (he has returned to the cinema after 7 years). He has incorporated it into his characters, used it to mark its grim effect on their faces. The scenes in the marshes where man carries on his desperate fight against a hostile nature, the scenes in the poor farms where, down the staircases and even in the road outside, crowds fall on their knees at the news of Maria's death, are scenes charged with profoundly moving tension and inner poetic force. They alone would be enough to make this a noble film.

Among the actors, all of whom are ordinary types chosen from the locality, special mention must be made of two; the little girl who plays the leading part, lit with inner sincerity and giving an impression of high spirituality and natural simplicity at the same time; and the young man who plays the unsympathetic and difficult part of the murderer. He portrays with most delicately shaded sensibility all the contradictions of the character.

The efficient, unpretentious photography of Aldo is a poet's interpretation of the countryside.

Gian-Luigi Rondi

"THE TRUE SPIRIT OF A PART; *That is what matters*"

DECLARES MASSIMO GIROTTI

The actor is playing an important part in the rebirth of the Italian cinema. It seemed worth while to us, therefore, to put certain questions to one of them who is particularly representative and who introduced a note of authentic spirituality into the part of Saint Sebastian in FABIOLA — Massimo Girotti. Here are the answers collected by our friend Lo Duca.

Thirty films behind me do not perhaps entitle me to speak of the actors' art, but they are doubtless sufficient to talk about my own experience.

Two films stand out clearly: OSSESSIONE (The Postman Always Rings Twice) and IN NOME DELLA LEGGE (In the Name of the Law). In the first I discovered the power of a director, his gift for releasing the actor's emotion, his skill in bringing out the right feeling at the very moment when he wishes him to project it. This director was Luchino Visconti. OSSESSIONE is without a doubt my best film because I have a well defined part, intense and yet clear-cut, and because the part suits my temperament. It is to Visconti that I owe this externalisation of myself, all the more since I believe that everyone could act in the hands of a good director. I have been in turn the actor chosen by Visconti, Blasetti, de Sica, de Santis, Zampa, Germi.

In Germi's film IN NOME DELLA LEGGE, I again found a clearly drawn part the lines of which follow my character as an actor, but

the part of the "witness", the young officer who passes through the last years of Italian history (The Difficult Years), had already attracted me.

Another film stands out as a vehicle for the role which Blasetti entrusted to me: that of Saint Sebastian in FABIOLA. This had great significance for me from the very beginning, for the holiness of the character — at first quite hidden — frightened me. It was also a severe physical strain; I remained bound hand and foot for six or seven hours for the boundless and mysterious necessities of shooting. But I suffered joyfully at the thought of the Christian message which the film would carry into the world. This physical suffering helped me to reach the emotional state necessary to the true spirit of my part.

"The true spirit of a part": that is everything. It is the result of a tension without which the acting is false. The director should never force this tension on the actor; the latter can only find it alone. It comes, as does a state of grace, almost insensibly and is finally transformed into an emotion which can be communicated.

Piero REGNOLI

Film critic on "Osservatore Romano"

The Technical Equipment of the Italian Cinema

Italian production arose mutilated from the welter of material and moral ruin brought about by the war, and in the immediate post-war period found itself faced by essential fundamental problems on the question of content and form.

The deep wounds, both of body and mind, which Italians had suffered, coupled with their hyper-developed critical faculty, created "realism" as a charter, charged with a living and lived reality; thus the aesthetic problem was solved. But no correspond-

ing renewal has taken place in the technical or rather the industrial field where the conditions necessary for the creation of a film are to be found.

After the success of *OPEN CITY*, which was made in part during the German occupation with chance means, many firms sprang up and produced films dealing with the Resistance theme along realist lines, but exhausted themselves in producing only one film and rapidly disappeared from view, leaving the single pathetic reminder of their existence. Faced with the multiplicity of firms which thought only of immediate profit, few organisations were able to resist and survive. Even the *Lux* firm is not an organisation indispensable to the Italian cinema, rather is it a centre for the setting in train of projects. It has no studio, no circuits, no fixed staffs of actors and technicians; it produces more in collaboration than alone; it has very few people under contract, has no fixed clientele; and is, therefore, exposed to all the risks and dangers of the independent firms and like them is subject to the tyranny of "the trade".

Another paradox presented by the cinema in Italy is that of those firms who own studios; instead of producing themselves they rent out their studios or else make one film from time to time with infinite precaution and with indecision and lack of means worse than those of the individual producers cited before. The *Scalera* failed during the war and immediately afterwards; nothing came out of it except *Universalis*, which is by no means permanent.

To aggravate this depressing situation there is a large number of Hollywood films filling Italian cinemas and removing almost every chance of bookings for national productions; in this matter an appeal to the State is more or less inevitable. Only the State can intervene in a decisive way and with the necessary force to give a solid base to the Italian film industry, unless at the last moment there should appear a Rank whom circumstances have discouraged from showing himself until now.

Today the State has in *Enic*, *Luce* and *Cinecitta* important means for the production and exploitation of films; thanks to *Enic*, it has under its control 235 cinemas covering the whole of Italy. The *Luce* institute possesses modern, effective instruments for the development, printing and presentation of films. While in *Cinecitta*, recently a hostel for political refugees, but now returned to its original use, the State has a centre of production (studios, machines etc.) which, of its kind, is a rarity in Europe.

In order that the State can operate at the different stages of production there must be created an

instrument which can benefit from the *Enic* circuits, from the equipment of the *Luce* institute and from the *Cinecitta* studios; then it could attain a high artistic and commercial level, without being worried with exploitation, which always has a bad effect on even the best production houses which have no circuits of their own. Such an instrument is indeed being set up. This must depend very largely on private controlled capital — and, as is necessary, it will have a national market and an assured channel for its productions thanks to the sixty cinemas owned by *Enic* and to the 175 others which it controls. *Cinecitta* will obviously be its laboratory and the *Luce* institute will be a valuable aid in synchronisation and copying. A co-ordinating bureau which will also launch the products of the four productive branches will complete the organisation. The advantages of this situation are incalculable; free from all worry about studios, renting and distribution, the producer can concentrate his efforts on bettering the quality of his production; he will be able to choose the most suitable colleagues in every field, insist on long contracts which have a steadying influence, and make wide production plans, so that all his films will be carefully organised and prepared down to the least detail. Unfortunately the speed at which films are made and the worries of the producer while waiting for the results of exploitation, sometimes very slow because of difficulties of renting and distribution, before beginning another film are only too well known. A body such as we have described, capable of raising the level of productions, could not fail to have a favourable effect on national production as a whole, which would get rid of speculators and retain a firm capital and well organised firms capable of fighting the ever-increasing cost of productions.

This, in broad outline, is what Colonel Civallero told the press when he spoke to the newly-formed *Cines*. We may add that it should not be the only production organisation of the Italian cinema. Following its example, other members of the industry will begin to organise their production in a more stable, higher and more worthy way. The important thing is to begin; good results will quickly follow, for the thing we have to express is something that the whole world envies us. Only, that source must not dry up, be diverted or fouled. The present necessity for the Italian cinema is to organise production; it will only be when that basic objective has been reached that the cinema — free from all restraining bonds — will be able to stand on its own feet.

Piero Regnoli

Film Literature in Italy

The path followed by cinema criticism in a little over fifty years goes from mere catalogues and variety bills to publicity folders and resumé's, from journalism to specialist literature. There still exist, as an integral part of the film world, catalogues, brochures, fashion or variety pages, makeshift and superficial criticisms. Often reputable newspapers give them space, but the editor is faced with the difficulty, often not surmounted, of choosing a critic well equipped for his work by a film education acquired at first hand. There exists, nowadays, a literature of the film which is manifested in books, anecdotes and aesthetic discussions. This is a phenomenon due to the activity of educated men who have dedicated their work to the cinema in order to produce literary studies of it (*Bianco e Nero*, *La Revue du Cinéma*, *Cinéma* etc.), courses of lectures in universities (such as the Faculty of Journalism at Pro Deo or the Filmology course at Rome University) and sound, reasoned and justified classifications, like the solid panorama produced by Guido Aristarco in *IL FILM DEL DOPOGUERRA*.

The phenomenon of film literature once accepted, one can determine the position of criticism nowadays, and present the points already gained as problems which from now on may be regarded as solved. This literature had its first authors in the Italians Canudo and Marinetti; those who founded the French branch, Delluc, Dulac, Epstein, l'Herbier, Cocteau and Clair may be regarded primarily as Europeans; the Soviet representatives, Pudovkin and Eisenstein are chiefly interested in the fundamental problem of montage. The Germans, or those of German adoption, Balazs, Arnheim and Richter, emphasised the factors of differentiation which can add so much to a film's aesthetic quality. The Englishmen, Grierson and Rotha established the importance of the documentary as "creative treatment of reality".

It is not an exaggeration to say that most of these authors share no topical interest but an historical one, as, for instance, Canudo, for having created and resolved the aesthetic problem of the cinema, which is a matter of history. The same is true of Marinetti, who published a Cinema Manifesto, the advanced ideas of which were to be put into practice by the Russians and, owing to the influence of Eggeling and Fischinger, by Walt Disney. The writings of the Frenchmen mentioned above

are today history, as too the theory of montage and those of differentiation and the problem of reality, even though they still help the documentary makers to develop their work still further.

In Italy, Chiarini and Barbaro, following Canudo and Marinetti, Luciani and Giovannetti, represented the maturity of the pioneer period of film literature, classifying film problems and absorbing all the experience gained in Europe. Yet their works, conceived shortly after those of the theorists mentioned before, were no better than those of Pudovkin, Balazs, Rotha and Richter. They paused at the problem "Is the cinema an art and why?" Croce's opinion might well have applied to them: "The aesthetic problem is solved; cinema criticism must set itself others; a vast field is open to it. It is useless to continue to work at a solution valid only for an already resolved question".

The section which survives and has a wide field of research before it, is the one developed in the last works of Eisenstein, Arnheim and Epstein, which go beyond the traditional research into film problems. There is no longer any question of the already solved aesthetic problem now of the montage, whose creator knows its importance and keeps it in mind by force of habit; nor of the already known factors of differentiation. It is now a question of attacking the problem of language, the film sense, a philosophy of sight (as Epstein wrote in *Le Mercure de France*, February 1949); of understanding the internal and external psychological problems of the film, as Arnheim says. This is the most vital part of film literature, which co-ordinates the scattered work of the historians, Sadoul, Pasinetti, Vincent, Jacobs, Manvell, Zuniga. One gets an echo of it, and realises its importance, in those studies which have been called filmologic and are really a scientific elaboration of problems which are not new but have been accepted by the academic world and presented with a dignity which film literature must accept.

Cohen-Séat's filmology, proposed in 1946, served to quicken, in the University, studies which were already there in a latent form; there were the pioneers already named; there was Luciano De Feo who in 1931 had begun to study 'filmic phenomena' and the effects of the cinema, which is the object of filmology, which, by the way, the Spanish call Cinematología.

logy; in "La Rivista del Cinema Educatore" and in "Cinema" (No. 1 1936) De Feo discussed the influence of the screen on the public. There was Eisenstein who studied the psychology of nations and of cinema audiences since 1930, basing his work on Lévy-Bruhl, which raised the question of language compared to the visual means of the cinema when applied to Chinese symbols, Siennese painting, Goya's pictures or the poetry of Pushkin or Shelley. This was real filmology, to which Cohen-Séat and his French colleagues, almost as if they mistrusted the technicians, did not at first adhere; they considered that one should examine the psychological and sociological problems which arose, after and not before, the films were shown. But that was acting like Lumière who said: "My cinematograph will only be of value as a scientific curiosity". The cinema, in fantastic fashion, was almost to engulf its inventor.

So today, filmology invades every branch of learning, psychology, sociology, philology, literature and specialised criticism (that is, film literature), while becoming in its own field (while drawing strength from the earlier experience of Eisenstein, Arn-

heim, Epstein and De Feo), the true science and philosophy of the film. This filmology movement has had the effect of raising cinema culture on the scientific plane and has given it a nobility of its own. To this movement, understood in its most universal sense and not split up into innumerable sections, belong the work and writings of Chiarini, Barbaro, Sadoul, Cohen-Séat, Ragghianti, Roques, Van Den Berk, Gonseth, Katz, Gemelli, Morlion, Pasinetti, and Balazs (the last two are no longer working, but both in their own spheres, using different languages, were practitioners of a film culture and philosophy). And Italy, which can be proud of having organised two International Congresses of Filmology, as well as University courses in filmology, sees every day an addition to the number of its filmology schools and students of filmology among whom should be mentioned Spirito, Volpicelli, Musatti, Ponzio, Lombardi, Piccolo, Pellizi and Mariani, all of whom are welcome newcomers to the wide field of cinema study.

Mario Verdone

Diego FABBRI

(Artist Adviser of "Ente dello Spettacolo", Rome.)

A FEW SCANDALS OF THE ITALIAN CINEMA

The C. C. C. (Centro Cattólico del Cinematografo) has recently been severely tested on the appearance of two films. They are "AMORE" ("Love"), produced by Rossellini, and "LADRI DI BICICLETTE" ("Bicycle Thieves"), produced by Vittorio de Sica.

In these two films, the moral implications of a few situations and scenes are important enough to warrant the judgement and advice of the C. C. C. in so far as it is an institution set up by ecclesiastical authority to guide the Catholic conscience. In accordance with this commission, the verdict of the examining body was that "AMORE" is not to be recommended at all, and that "LADRI DI BICICLETTE" ought to be for adults only.

AMORE.

It was especially the second episode of this film which led to its condemnation. It deals with an extraordinarily cruel story of a poor peasant girl whose mind is weak. She suffers from religious mania, and imagines she recognises St. Joseph in an old tramp. When she discovers that she is going to have a baby, she thinks some miraculous power is responsible. Gradually she convinces herself that the child within her is a wondrous being. On this theme, so like the story of the Incarnation, the film embroiders a series of events which claim to contrast the purity of heart of the poor simpleton with the cruelty of the whole village.

For the village, although pretending to be pious, treats her with contempt instead of Christian charity.

From the time of the presentation of this film at the Venice Festival, there have been two schools of thought among Catholic critics. Some concentrate entirely on the delicacy of the story, and do not see in Rossellini's film any blasphemous caricature or sacrilegious use of a sacred mystery. Others do not call into question the motives of the author, but nevertheless affirm that the analogy with the mystery is inescapable, and so shocking that it makes the particular scene sacrilegious. These two points of view have been explained at length in *Il Popolo*, Carlo Trabucco writing for the laxists, and Remo Bianco for the rigorists.

The revisory committee of the C. C. C. has made the following authoritative decision: "The second episode of this film, entitled 'THE MIRACLE' is an abominable profanation. From a religious and moral viewpoint we must vigorously deplore both production and presentation. It is scarcely to be imagined that anyone could think of and present to the public such a parody of the sacred mystery on which the whole of Christian belief is founded. We warn all classes of the public against seeing this film".

As might be expected, this strictly religious discussion did not lack its political turn. This was of course due to the Communist "Unità", which, although it had already described the film as a "negative experience" on 8th November,

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1948, proceeded to cite it a few days later as an example of the moral and religious wretchedness in which, according to the paper, the clergy delight to keep backward sections of the community.

LADRI DI BICICLETTE.

This is the sad story of a poor workman who needs his bike for his job, and has it stolen. In spite of its pessimism, this film would have been more warmly received even by Catholics if it had not contained a scene which makes a caricature of a Catholic institution for the relief of the poor, or if this scene had been substantially reduced. But simply because of the insistence with which it aims to represent Christian charity in an offensive superficial way, the examining board of the C. C. C. felt it to be a duty to forewarn the faithful in the following words. *"From the moral point of view, it is to be noticed that the film is full of an excessive pessimism. There is not the slightest indication of the consolation which the Faith brings. The ironic description of the 'Messe du pauvre' is quite out of place, and has no correspondence with the truth. The film exposes abuses and scandals, but what makes it dangerous for the general public is the way in which certain situations are presented and certain moral problems considered. Unrestricted exhibition of this film is not recommended. It should be for adults only"*.

The Catholic press was in agreement with this opinion, and regretfully moderated a legitimate artistic appreciation, making however a reservation which is happily phrased in the *"Quotidiano"* of 26th November, 1948. *"If you wish to serve reality, you must have the courage to accept it in its entirety, and Christian virtue, for those who seek it honestly, is a reality"*. The *"Osservatore Romano"* raises the strongest voice against the scene about the "MESSE DU PAUVRE" which is an institution founded by the late Don Moresco, still carrying on his charitable work in Rome.

"Unità" seized another chance to institute a political campaign far out of proportion to the facts. According to this paper, "The Packard proprietors of Vatican City" should have threatened the film with "excommunication", and should have advised the Under Secretary of State, Signor Andreotti, to withdraw it from circulation. Moreover, according to *"Unità"*, they should have declared that they were on the side of the bourgeois who try to make mugs out of the people, and against the proletariat, who allow them to carry on, thus being accessories to the reactionary charitable works of bankers and plutocrats who try to put their consciences at rest with a few strokes of "thinners". All these ravings presented of course with plenty of headlines over many columns, in the style which endears the paper to one and all.

Needless to say, we agree with *"Osservatore Romano"*. But to the objective reasons which result from the showing of the film, and which have provoked justified criticism, it seems to us that others must be added which concern rather the taste and loyalty of the director, De Sica.

It often happens that producers and directors apply to competent cinematographic societies, or to ecclesiastical authority for permission and facilities to make documentary scenes in places which normally are preserved from invasion by the cinema, and with their tongues in their cheeks they maintain that the resultant scenes are entirely praiseworthy. Often Catholic film societies show that they appreciate these requests, and successfully exert their influence to have the necessary permission granted. This has proved and still proves in a concrete way the spirit of collaboration between Catholics with regard to the cinema, but also it allows

producers to economise on the hundreds and thousands of pounds they would have otherwise spent on studio sets.

However, director De Sica has not only found the "inspiration" of his episode in being present merely, as Zavattini shows in a back number of *"Bis"*; he has, in addition taken advantage of the hospitality and absolute good faith of the directors of this charitable institution, who evidently never dreamed that they would be so subtly ridiculed in the film. De Sica now wants us to believe that this "was not his intention". We are regretfully compelled to classify this as a very naive apology.

ANNI DIFFICILI

The scandal aroused by the film "ANNI DIFFICILI" (DIFFICULT YEARS) is of another kind; it is a question this time of political scandal. The story is adapted from a book by Vitaliano Brancati, entitled *"Il vecchio con gli stivali"* ("The old man with his boots on"), and has provoked lively discussion in the Senate and Chambre de Deputés because Fascism and Anti-Fascism are directly put up for trial in it. For about two years, the novel had a peaceful career, without raising any noise save that discreet and padded from the literary papers. One might have concluded that men in politics, like the people they represent, prefer the cinema to literature. Quite indifferent to the story lying neatly in print, they only begin to take offence when the story has figured in a film: they have recognised themselves, and suddenly become angry.

They pretend to see themselves satirised in a jovial group of good fellows who meet at the village chemist's to put up some kind of anti-fascist front, inoffensive, though ardent in appearance, between a couple of hands of cards, a song and a pasquinade. Whether the number of senators and deputies who have been outraged be small or large — as some wish us to believe — is a question of no interest here. What must be said, however, is that the only aspect of the film which gives to biting satire is precisely this (that they recognise themselves. Tr), and that this satire bites deeply. As for the rest, the story unfolds itself on an easily foreseen, monotonous theme, since once the moral key of the tale has been given, the facts, although numerous and outwardly diverse, roll on without ever being new, and what is worse, without the characters being new. These carry on as though they knew in advance everything that is going to happen to them, their doubts, their action and reaction, their misfortunes, are for them — and so for us, too — without surprise, completely expected, without progression. These puppets live no adventure. They were trying, perhaps to be not silhouettes, stiff as a poker, but real characters, with the mechanical gestures and interior poverty of silhouettes. Empty pretence! If such is the case, these debonair conspirators of the chemist's shop are the only convincing figure of a boring, flabby adventure.

To make a story probable, and therefore interesting, one must catch a glimpse of the dawn of a "promising sun", even if it be a pasteboard effort viewed by these conventional anti-Fascists. What is lacking throughout the film is simply this "promising sun" to raise an Italian revolutionary song. Against such a criterion, events and characters would have been able to run counter, and some critical appreciation would have been possible. Since this element is lacking, the initial smile and sympathy never mature — they wither away; and the shots at the end which cause the death of a man, the vague accusation of collective villany, become gratuitous, unproductive and even irritating. We

do not wish to be forced to wonder how the authors were pleased with the last few feet, when for a few hundred thousand feet of scurf they have tried to make us believe that there was absolutely nothing serious in their story, and that no one in it was in the wrong.

After all, it is not only in Fascist parades that boots fit badly; and the attempt to reduce the authentic drama of these difficult years to the drama of swollen feet may be an indication, not of liberal superiority, but of an inability to see clearly. In spite of all these considerations due to Tche-

koff, the drama of a lost umbrella has not the same weight as that of a betrayed husband. Such an arbitrary, literary comparison would make most things unacceptable and disagreeable, — and also "ANNI DIFFICILI".

To be dogmatic, and to be sceptical are both evils; of the two, we prefer the former. For among so many chances of making a mistake one may meet in a dogmatic statement at least some correspondence with the truth, whereas scepticism will always be the vain attempt which is stifled at birth.

THE ITALIAN DOCUMENTARY TODAY

Francesco Pasinetti has disappeared; his work as a director is no longer seen at the Venice Festival. So has Roberto Omegna, who was the pioneer of the scientific film, the exotic film, and the news reel. Many of the best makers of documentaries have gone into big films; Giovanni Palucci, Luigi Comencini, Fernando Cerchio, to name but three. Men like Pozzi Bellini have for long been silent and yet the Italian documentary, far from being exhausted, counts among its names some of the best specialists in Europe, with Luciano Emmer and Enrico Gras heading the list for films on art, above Storck, Haesaerts and Resnais — Michelangelo Antonioni is introducing Italian realism into shorts. His films *GENTE DEL PO*, *NETTEZZA URBANA* and *AMOROSA MENZOGNA* are very close to the spirit of the Italian cinema of today. In *AMOROSA MENZOGNA*, which deals with illustrated papers, we are presented with almost a little film in documentary, and Antonioni shows that he is ripe for more complex and less restricted undertakings; it is hoped that he will have something to say in the neorealist movement. Perhaps we shall soon have in him another good director.

Francesco Maselli is in the same class as Antonioni; we had at Venice a very adequate *BAGNAIA*, *PAESAGGIO ITALICO* which presented accurately the atmosphere and appearance of a village of the "Castelli Romani". Others have dealt, in the vein of Pasinetti and Comencini, with its backgrounds. There is some rather outstanding commentary in *CITTA ALTA* by Questi and Terzi. Two delightful films are the simple *VENEZIA MINORE* and *BIMBI IN CITTA*, the latter full of an expressive vitality. *STRADE DI NAPOLI* was undertaken in picturesque style by Dino Risi; and *Avanzo*, faithful, like Rossellini, to aquatic films (his documentaries on fish are perhaps the most valuable of his work) is amongst the foremost directors with *ISOLE DI CENERE*, *BIANCHE EOLIE* and *CACCIA SOTTOMARINA*. His *TRA SCILLA E CARIDDI* was justly awarded first prize at the Belgian Festival.

A type of documentary which is becoming more and more prominent is that inspired by religious art. As in France there have appeared *L'EVANGILE DE LA PIERRE* and *LES GISANTS*, recent Italian production has shown many similar attempts, some of which reach an unusually high level, such as *ANTICO TESTAMENTO* by the *Beato Angelico Institute*, and *LA PASSIONE SECONDO SAN MATTEO* by Ernst Marischka in which the music and iconography blend harmoniously.

Several short films which appeared this year belong to this group, among them some which were actually shown at Venice: for instance *SENTIERI DELL'ANNO SANTO*, written by Enrico Francia and produced in colour, *SANTA CECILIA*, *REGINA DELLE ARMONIE* and *CASTELGANDOLFO* by *Di Nitto Films* and *MONTE VERNIA* by *Electron Films*. Along with these films, one sees films of the Italian countryside, scientific films, industrial films, films on art and publicity films, all of which bear witness to the intense and varied effort made by our documentary producers, which had produced *SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE* by Ugo de Rossi, with photography by Schiavinotto on a theme loved by Pasinetti, *MAESTRI DELLE CARICATURE* by Polidoro, with commentary by Visentini, *ROMANZA SENZA PAROLE* by Salvatore Danó, Venetian in atmosphere, being a sort of visual interpretation of the music to which his stay in Venice in 1830 inspired Mendelssohn, of which certain themes and passages seem a continuation of Pasinetti's work, just as the didactic film *GLI ECHINODERMI* by the *Cinothèque Scolaire* seems to carry on the work begun by the pioneer Roberto Omegna.

Among the already known films and film-makers we should notice a new-comer, Mele, who, surreptitiously using a small camera during the Tucci expedition to Thibet, was able to make *TIBET PROIBITO* in colour, a film which the Venice jury voted among the most significant of those shown.

Mario Verdone



1. The Po valley
in
Il Mulino del Po
(The Mill on the Po)



2. A street in Rome
Ladri di Biciclette
(Bicycle Thieves)

DECOR IN THE ITALIAN CINEMA



3. The Pontine
Marshes in
Cielo sulla Palude
(Maria Goretti)



4. The arid Sicilian landscape in **In Nome della Legge** (In the Name of the Law)

FILMS AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

It is an established fact that the film can be a powerful aid to the spread of culture. In fact for several years there has been a steady increase in the production of documentaries and instructional "shorts" and today films combining artistic and educational value are by no means rare.

What is valid for art and knowledge in general is obviously valid for religion, which being interpreted through the medium of the film can reach a wide public and can exert a beneficial influence not only by reason of visual interest but by an appeal to the heart aroused by the film story. By this visual method the desired result can be achieved more easily than by a cold oral dissertation.

Is the cinema at the present day ready to interpret in a fitting manner a given religious subject, and so to become a medium of religious instruction without at the same time falling into the faults of conventional rhetoric?

In our opinion the time is ripe. The Italian Catholic Cinema Centre, confident not only in the worthiness of the cause but also in the capabilities of the men of the cinema, has been at work for a long time to translate for the screen the language of Christian doctrine.

The complex problem of this type of film has been studied (for three years) by competent persons, from the angle of doctrinal instruction, and this study has been pursued not only in the film offices but in the studios, by the experimental filming of two shorts, the themes of which were definitely catechetical. As a result of these concrete experiments studied by the teaching profession, it was decided that films of this religious and instructional type satisfy the requirements of priests, teachers and parents who naturally will be the principal consumers. At the same time these films satisfy the innumerable requirements of the children who will have to see them and benefit from them. Evidently they also satisfy cineasts since the recent International Festival at Salerno awarded the first prize to our catechetical short film *GOD IS A (Pure) SPIRIT*, directed by Mario Soldati.

In the carrying out of this difficult task, the manner of treatment was the main preoccupation; whether to emphasise the instructional nature of the film at the expense of the visual attraction was a debated point. Finally after much discussion it was decided that catechetical films should begin with a subject of visual interest, then proceed in the course

of the development, to a more strictly instructional representation. Each "short" will have an arresting theme which will arouse the interest of the spectator, and almost imperceptibly lead him on to absorb the teaching contained in the film.

Catechetical films of this nature, even though they cover the whole of Christian doctrine, will not however be a substitute for regular and methodical teaching of doctrinal matter. The various "shorts" will stress the predominant religious idea of each, the objective will be to impress in the mind and heart of the spectator the essential doctrine illustrated by the plot. It is intended in this way to impart knowledge but also by means of film strips and other instructional aids to emphasise and complete the oral teaching of catechism.

The general programme of this work which will add an appealing modern note to the unchangeable doctrine of the Catholic Church, consists of three groups of short films which must each fully develop a Catechism Course. The three groups differ from each other in that they are shown to audiences of different ages and at different educational levels. They proceed in fact from the Infant Stage, with children scarcely beginning their Primary Course, to those finishing their secondary studies, that is from children of five to seven to adolescents of fourteen to sixteen years.

Before venturing on the production of the specialised courses already mentioned, it was considered advisable from every point of view (teaching, propaganda etc.) to begin with a complete Catechism Course, including the principal points of doctrine to be taught and to illustrate them in a way likely to arouse and to hold the interest of children of similar age and educational level. The films would be subtly instructional and sufficiently attractive for a number to be presented to the general public in commercial cinemas.

The method and programmes having been definitely settled, the work of production began. Two commissions were set up — one for the doctrinal and instructional side, the other for the technical and artistic side.

The task of the first Commission was to choose subject matter for filming. The Catechism of Pius X was taken in its entirety — Christian Doctrine was divided into thirty lessons. The following is the list of titles:

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God, The Blessed Trinity, The Angels, Man, Jesus Christ: His Preaching and Teaching, Jesus Christ: His Passion and Death, The Catholic Church and the Pope, Baptism, Confirmation, The Holy Eucharist, The Real Presence, Communion, The Holy Mass, Confession: Conditions for a good confession, How to make a good confession, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, Matrimony, Prayer, The Liturgical Year, Virtues and Vices, Theological and Cardinal Virtues, Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, I, II and III Commandments, IV Commandment — Honour thy father and thy mother, V Commandment — Thou shalt not kill, VI and IX Commandments Holy Purity, VII and IX Commandments Thou shalt not steal, VIII Commandment Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour, The Commandments of the Church, The Blessed Virgin, The Christian's Daily Exercise.

Following this an Ideological Commission (composed of highly experienced priests and catechists) proposed the subjects for each theme, trying to emphasise what they desired should be particularly stressed, and passed on directives to the Instructional Committee composed of authors and writers who,

with their artistic talents, would form an "Animus Christianus". Exchange of views and discussions took place between the two Commissions until the time came for editing films, together with cutting, dialogue and sound track.

A number of these films are ready to be produced, but since this is an undertaking which does not affect Italian Catholics alone, the productions of the Committee are at present being sent to numerous other religious experts, who, when they have seen them, will criticise them, give their advice and make suggestions.

The short films will be available both in 35 mm and in 16 mm in order to suit all requirements such as schools, colleges, oratories etc.

The Italian Catholic Cinema Centre hopes that with the carrying out of the first part of the programme of the religious instructional film, it will render effective aid to the Clergy, to Catholic Action and to all who have the interest of man's immortal soul at heart, and at the same time offer to the cinema the possibility of a new experiment which may open out boundless horizons.

Monsignore Albinio Galletto

Ugo SCIASCIA

AN ITALIAN ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC EXHIBITORS

(A. C. E. C.)

Another abbreviation to add to the list, you may say. But this is something more. It is a real step forward for the Catholic cinema in our country.

We have set ourselves the task of convincing you of the truth of this statement and giving you yet further information on the many aspects of the apostolate which is offered by the cinema.

All our ideas are already in the Encyclicals.

As far as the cinema is concerned, as indeed every modern problem, when one succeeds in formulating a programme on conclusions established after much weary experimenting, one always discovers with a shock that the question has already been dealt with in one or other of the Encyclicals. And so more promises are made to read them all carefully, but it never gets done.

That is what happened with the cinema. It is easily seen that a purely negative attitude, such as film criticism, cannot solve the problem. We must produce films. But how? Technical equipment and experts cannot be improvised on the spur of the moment. We must look to the future, but with a wholly realist view of the problem. Nothing can be done immediately except to try to influence production

indirectly. The producer, who may not be susceptible to moral considerations is, on the other hand, very alert to economic consequences. Let us then organise his market, that is the cinemas. There are more than three thousand in Italy. What a force !

"By the organisation of such cinemas, which frequently represent a substantial market for the film industry, we can assert a new right, which is that that industry should produce films which are fully in keeping with our principles."

Here is an illustration of what we are saying. There are experiments, meetings and discussions. The conclusion is already there, in the Encyclical "Vigilanti Cura" of Pius IX, from which the above quotation is made.

The Problem of Catholic Cinemas.

In a world which tends more and more towards organised activities, the independent body has the worst of it. The parochial cinema, which has to hire its films, has often, in order to have a film of such value as BERNADETTE, to accept willy-nilly, four or five others at the choice of the agent, who is not much troubled by moral classifications. The conditions are fixed: take it or leave it.

The need for unity has long been felt, so much so that in Northern Italy there are already ten or so Consortiums

THE ITALIAN CINEMA TALKS TO US

of Catholic cinemas which are flourishing. But something else was needed; we had to represent ourselves to producers, private and public companies, and the film world generally, as a united front if we were to be considered as a force.

On each occasion that the Centro Cattólico has begun discussions with the central organisations of film activity, we were told that conditions would have been very different if we had all appeared together.

One of the major obstacles was caused by the very different conditions prevailing in each diocese as far as the problems of the cinema are concerned; in Southern Italy and the Islands, the question did not arise, while in the North flourishing Consortiums existed already. The idea of an association could not turn this reality into an abstraction; it was therefore decided that membership of the association should be open to the Consortiums, and where these did not exist to individual cinemas, always hoping for the progressive formation of intermediary organisations, whether diocesan or inter-diocesan, which is what the Consortiums are.

The A. C. E. C.

Article 1 of the Articles of Association states: "Under the auspices of the C. C. C., and in accordance with the wish of the August Pontiff as expressed in the Encyclical *Vigilanti Cura*, the Catholic Association of Film Exhibitors has been set up with its centre in Rome."

Here, then, is the beginning.

It would be superfluous to detail the articles of association here; it may, however, be of interest to know the precise aims of A. C. E. C. It has as its intentions:

(a) To represent the moral and material interest of Catholic exhibitors, especially in matters relating to the

legal administration, to public and private companies and to syndicates.

(b) To study and solve the moral, social and economic problems of the exhibitors themselves, by means of agreements with the appropriate State departments and other interested bodies, in order to increase to the maximum possible the production and distribution of films in keeping with the moral and educational principles of the Catholic Church.

(c) To ensure to its members a service of legal, administrative and fiscal assistance.

(d) To promote and assist every direct agreement which might in the common interest govern relations with other exhibitors and with the privately owned cinema industry.

It is unnecessary to stress the self-evident fact that the association will be strong only in so far as the Catholic cinemas joining it are numerous.

For this reason His Eminence Cardinal Urbani, in his capacity of the Episcopal Commission's secretary to the governing body of the A. C. I., thought fit, in a circular to the Bishops, to solicit "the official support which such an undertaking deserves and effective action in order that every cinema in the Diocese should become an active member".

It will naturally take time for the Association to reach its full capability. To accelerate the process, officers of the Ente dello Spettacolo (which, through its Cinema Theatres department, is part of C. C. C.) are visiting each diocese to discuss the outlines of a plan of healthy activity.

Without being too optimistic, we consider that hard preparatory work, coupled with a general response, will allow the organisation to be working fully in time for the Holy Year. And we should like to regard that as a happy omen.

Ugo Sciascia.

THE 1949 FESTIVALS

Knokke - Venice - Cannes

The year 1949 marks in Europe an important stage in the history of international cinematographic competitions.

During the three months, June to September, festivals were succeeding each other practically without interruption.

The three most outstanding of these — if exception is made for that at Mariánské Lázně in Czechoslovakia, at which the "Western" cinema was only very partially represented — took place in Belgium (Knokke-le-Zoute, from June 18th to July 10th), in Italy (Venice, August 12th to September 1st) and in France (Cannes, from September 3rd to 17th).

In the result, there was a regrettable dispersion of good films, together with the participation of a group of films, which were nothing more than mediocre. Affected by this state of affairs, and exhausted by interminable film shows, the critics hastened to proclaim that a general crisis existed in the cinema world. The Public, informed by the press of the more wordly side of the activities, saw nothing in the Festival but an entertainment for snobs and charlatans.

We do not share these superficial views. It seems to us necessary to uphold the principle of large international gatherings, capable of making the best of the qualities, both artistic and spiritual of the works of the cinema. They constitute, in effect, a stimulant for those courageous pioneers who are in advance of the routine of a production often too commercialised.

But it is necessary, at all costs, to avoid those errors which run the risk of compromising principle. The article further on, by Jean De Bongnie, brings to this subject certain interesting suggestions. We also judge it opportune for a better understanding of the problem to explain the exact purpose the organisers of these Festivals had in view. It is for this reason that we have asked Count Elio Zorzi, one-time Director General and Chief of the publicity department of the "Biennale", to inform our readers as to the origin and character of the international exhibition of cinematographic art at Venice.

More and more these specialised gatherings, organised within the limits of a big Festival, but yet with plenty of scope, take on an unexpected importance. The Festival of the experimental and poetic film (Knokke), of children's films (Venice), of films by amateurs (Cannes), "Specialised" sections (Venice), showings of past films (Cannes) — all these are events of some little importance in the cultural development of the cinema. All this has been mirrored for us in the articles of Lo Ducca and Giulio Cesare Pradella.

Furthermore, meetings of people coming from countries often very far away, for the purpose of taking part in an activity which releases them from the daily worries of their professions, favours the exchange of ideas and encourages collaboration on the international level in matters artistic, cultural, scientific and commercial. Gatherings concerned with filmology, film libraries, film publications, cinema clubs, the industrial aspect, with practically everything, are held on the occasion of these festivals, besides the many individual contacts between professional people of many countries. In this connection one hopes that the number of people attending these Festivals from non-European countries will increase in spite of geographical and psychological obstacles, thus giving a truly universal character to these exchanges of view. Here again a tightening up of these festivals would make an appreciable improvement.

The attitude of the Association of Hollywood firms in announcing officially their decision not in future to disperse their representatives between several different festivals, appears to be reasonable. In this connection an arrangement between the organisers of these competitions is necessary as well as a certain discipline amongst those who send the films.

One could even now draw up an exciting programme for a unique world festival this year, with the works shown at the three big festivals of the summer. Instead of talking of a crisis, one ought certainly to see signs of a probable renaissance, signs above all in the realm of the scenario where the monotony of the war period and the immediate post war period seems to have disappeared. Experience confirms here the opinion of those who, with Father Morlion, proclaim the superiority of the scenario writer.

On this subject the example of the three films which obtained the Grand Prix at each of the three Festivals is significant. In spite of the technical mastery of Vittorio de Sica and Carol Reed, it is the quality of their subjects and the manner in which their scenario has been constructed which give the interest both to

LADRI DI BICICLETTA (*The Bicycle Thieves*) and *THE THIRD MAN*, the former gaining the prize at Knokke and the latter at Cannes. It is equally certain that the almost universal disapproval accorded to the Grand Prix Manon at the Biennale was not due to the interpretation of Henri-Georges Clouzot but to the particularly distressing and badly developed subject.

This growing importance of the theme in the cinema warrants, on the part of Christians, constructive co-operation. That is why the International Catholic Cinema Office felt obliged to be represented at the more important Festivals and to offer a special prize for the film "most capable of contributing to the moral and spiritual salvation of humanity."

We are profoundly grateful to the leaders of the competition at Knokke-le-Zoute (where our jury was presided over by Dr. Charles Reinert of Zurich) and of Venice (where this function was performed by the Rev. John A. V. Burke of London) for their understanding kindness and for the facilities accorded to the members of this special entertainment jury.

The presence of such a jury, preoccupied particularly with spiritual and moral values, at an important cinema Festival, encourages those in the cinema who are working sincerely for a better world.

Further on the reader will find, in the complete text of the decisions of our jury of Venice, an account of the work already accomplished in this connection. Nothing remains now except to wish a successful career to the films rewarded by the Catholic International Cinema Office. These are as follows:

HOME OF THE BRAVE, an American film produced by Stanley Kramer and directed by Mark Robson, awarded the prize at Knokke.

CIELO SULLA PALUDE (*Heaven on the Marshes*), an Italian film, produced by the brothers Bassoli and directed by Augusto Genina, awarded the prize at Venice.

There are also some films which received our 'Special Commendation' with, at their head:

THE PASSION OF ST. MATTHEW ACCORDING TO J. S. BACH, an Italo-Austrian film directed by H. Marischka;

SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC, a British film produced by Sir Michael Balcon and directed by Charles Friend.

Each of these films in its own way brings a precious contribution to the cultural activity of the cinema and to a better understanding between the peoples of the world. We are certain that our friends all over the world, will do their best to ensure the success of these productions.

André W. Ruszkowski

Count Elio ZORZI

Former General

Director of the International "Exhibition"
of Cinematographic Art of Venice

ARE FILM FESTIVALS NECESSARY?

THE FUTURE OF THE VENICE BIENNALE

The particular feature of the Venice "International Film Festival" and that which distinguishes it from all other cinema festivals which were patterned by it immediately after the second World war, in various European countries, especially at Cannes, Brussels, Locarno and Marianske Lazne, is this: the Venice Festival is the only one which, not content with being accompanied by other artistic manifestations like the world Film Festival of Belgium or like the Edinburgh Festival, takes its source directly from a great permanent organisation of contemporary art, to whose criterions it remains ideally attached.

When the "International Film Festival" was founded in 1937, the International Exhibition of Art in Venice was already thirty seven years in existence and had attained, in the world, an unprecedented degree of prestige for an exhibition of pure art.

The reason for this prestige was not transcendence nor even publicity; the great names of artists of all countries, which from 1895, had succeeded each other in each of the Venice exhibitions, every two years with mathematical regularity, were more or less the same as those of the Parisian "Salons" or of the other exhibitions organised periodically in the various

European capitals or in the majority of North American towns.

There was, however, a considerable difference between the Biennale of Venice and the other European and American exhibitions: it was that the organisers of the Biennale had known how to give authority, stability and prestige to their exhibition, through the serious nature of the organisation, through the fidelity to artistic ideals and through the application of a very simple idea: that of transposing into a permanent exhibition of international art the standards which are generally adopted in grandiose but sporadic enterprises, like the universal exhibitions.

The various artistic exhibitions, the four Parisian Salons, the Secession and the Glaspalast of Munich, the Kunstverein of Vienna and the Royal Academy of London, the Deutsche Kunstaussstellung of Berlin and all the other major and minor exhibitions, thanks to which the artists of Europe introduced themselves to the public, were and still are those which survive, organised according to the standards and under the exclusive responsibility of the exhibition administration.

In the *universal exhibition*, on the contrary, in accordance with a respected custom — whether the exhibition be held in Paris, Brussels, London or San Francisco, Milan or Saint Louis — all member nations assume the burden and responsibility for the choice of the objects to be exhibited in the various sections and for their installation, leaving the material, technical and moral co-ordination of the different sections in the general effect of the whole to the Management.

The same standard has been fixed every year for the participation of the various nations in the Venice Biennale. Each nation takes upon itself the financial burden, but especially the moral and artistic responsibility for the organisation and arrangement of the section in question, after agreement with the Presidency and the General Secretariat, which represent the unity and the continuity of the undertaking, co-ordinating the participation of the various countries among themselves.

Thus each nation is represented not only officially but with the selection of artists desired by the nation itself, according to its own standards or those adopted by its responsible spokesmen. So that it is a matter of a real national exhibition in the heart of the Venice International Organisation.

It was not without reason that after the first world war, when Europe and America had created for themselves the illusion that the entire life of peoples could be made peaceful and made to conform to rule directly through the League of Nations, that the Biennale of Venice had been viewed as a copy of the League of Nations in artistic matters.

L'Île des Jardins du Château, at the extreme tip of Venice towards the Lido, with its big and venerable plane trees and groves of oleander, which hide

the pavilions where the aspirations and the different artistic and spiritual leanings of the member states are enclosed, is regarded as the synthesis, peaceful and serene, the most representative in its refinement, of contemporary civilisation.

Grafted on that trunk, nourished with that vital sap, the "Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica" had, by the necessity of things, to develop and assert itself in analogous manner. Already, simply by the fact of admitting into its fold as an art and, under the sign of art, that complex manifestation in which art is in perpetual struggle with machinery and especially such an industry as the cinema, which was then emerging from the grave crisis which followed the victory of the talking over the silent picture, the Biennale had accomplished a courageous and generous act. It was understood and appreciated.

The reasons which, notwithstanding great opposition, had led the organisers to honour the new manifestation by the name of „Exhibition“, putting aside the more convenient term of festival, were also understood and appreciated.

It was desired that even by its name this manifestation should bear at one and the same time, the mark of the institutions of which it was the expression and an indication of its future development. Already some could see the Exhibition of Cinematographic Art as an exhibition of figurative art, with halls dedicated to contemporary artists, with other halls where the works of the artists who preceded them would be exhibited and with individual halls devoted to a few artists selected in advance.

From the beginning, since August 1932, when for ten consecutive nights films were projected on the sea-skirted terrace of a big hotel on the Lido in Venice, before a numerous and elegant public attracted by the novelty of the show, by the paramount quality of the films and by the brilliant atmosphere both fashionable and intellectual, it was evident that the new creation springing from the very heart of the Biennale had been born "alive and kicking". Count Volpi, the sculptor Antonio Maraini, President and Chief Secretary of the Biennale, and Luciano De Feo, director of the International Institute for educational films, a direct offspring of the League of Nations through the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation, of which it was a branch, had the proof of the success of their initiative. On the penultimate day of the Festival, the most notable art critics and cinema critics, Italians and foreigners, who had attended the show, and the delegates of the Austrian, French, German, English and Italian productions, were called together by Count Volpi in a hall of the Palace of the Doges, which was then the seat of the Biennale. He frankly put this question to them: "Does the new enterprise really deserve to be continued and developed?" The reply was a unanimous "Yes" with applause. Will Hay, the representative of the American Cinema, who,

after having given his cordial support to the first achievement of the initiative, wanted to show his good will by promising to continue helping it in the future, joined in the cheering.

The confidence that the public, the critics and the producers had put in the management of the Biennale had not been wrongly placed. Since the second Festival, in August 1934, a principle was adopted which served more than any other pledge or measure to make the Festival a success, by assuring an absolute impartiality and by placing it to some extent above national competitions. The Head of the Government, Mussolini, having expressed his intention of instituting a Cup to reward the best film shown at the Festival, the management of the Biennale pointed out to him that it was expedient to make two Cups of equal importance, one as a prize for the best Italian film, the other as a prize for the best foreign film. Mussolini admitted these arguments and agreed. So that from 1934 to 1939 there were two Mussolini Cups at each Festival. In this way they avoided the snares, which, in a display of an artistic nature where industry was involved from beginning to end, the exaggerated nationalism, the protectionism and the autocracy which was reigning in Fascist Italy would have produced. So Mussolini was clever enough to put the Venice Festival above all the nations, including Italy, and the management of the Festival which had become annual since 1935, knew how to maintain that attitude, making scrupulously sure that the strictest impartiality should control not only the assignment of the prizes but also the choice of programmes, the publicity, the invitations and all the relations of the technical administration with the nations and their delegates and agents; the delegates had a right to only one vote per country at the deliberations of the Jury.

The selection of the films was usually the business of the member states, the administration reserving the right to settle disputes or to submit films designated for two or three festivals to the examination of an acceptance committee.

At all events, neither the principles nor the rules of impartiality were curtailed, except in 1938 on account of the unexpected and inopportune interference of a French delegate.

That year the United States had sent, among other films, a feature length film from Walt Disney SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS and Germany had sent the great documentary on THE OLYMPIAD of Berlin, produced by Leni Riefenstahl. Neither of the two films could aspire to the Mussolini Cup, which was destined to reward a film on a subject presented at the Festival. However, the Germans were very desirous of this Cup and planned their manoeuvres in order to obtain it, but the American delegate was keeping watch and, in his turn, put forward the candidature of SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS (Blanche Neige). The

President and the Director of the Festival warded off the danger of the situation by creating two special Cups for the two rival films, at the same time having great work to persuade the German and American delegates. They had practically succeeded and obtained the renunciation of the longed for Cup from the two delegates, when the French delegate, to make sure of one of the minor prizes for his country, did not hesitate from going, by night, to see the German delegate to offer him his support and his vote for the Mussolini Cup on condition that the latter voted in his turn in favour of France for the minor prize. Naturally, the German delegate then refused the forestalled arrangement and the Mussolini Cup was conferred on THE OLYMPIAD. The American delegate left the Festival forthwith declaring that the American Cinema could provide its own films with a Festival less influenced by politics than that of Venice.

The dark threat was only carried out seven years afterwards, for the declaration of war, on the 1st of September 1939, prevented that very day, the foreseen inauguration of the first International Festival of Cannes. However a press campaign, as violent as it was unjustified, directed against the Venice Festival, developed in September 1946, to accompany the inauguration of the First Festival of Cannes, and it was even echoed in certain official communications and publications of the Festival, although meanwhile, thanks to the good will and mediation of the management of the Biennale, an agreement was made with that of Cannes. This campaign allows one to think that the press campaign of 1946, like the French step taken with the German delegate in 1938, was in conformity with a prepared plan aiming to uproot the Festival of Venice.

The plan failed for two reasons: on account of the opportune and reasonable nature of the agreements concluded between Venice and Cannes in 1946 and renewed in 1947, and because Venice, in face of the new Festival which was arising on the Côte d'Azur, rich in resources, in new ideas and in mundane attractions, was very badly placed for engaging in a struggle: it was still occupied by the Allied troops, endowed with poor resources and very limited tourist and hotel possibilities. So Venice was able to re-establish the true nature of her Festival: a manifestation, above all else, of cinematographic art.

The VIIIth Festival in 1947 was, from this point of view, a model. That year there was not only the second festival at Cannes but the second film festival at Locarno and the first world film festival and festival of fine arts in Belgium. However, the Venice festival was one of the most successful and most brilliant that have ever taken place. It had a vast well stocked historical section, it had interesting personal receptions (Renoir, Dreyer, Siodmak and others) it had a festival for one tendency of the French film; it had very important specialistic sections and

presented, on the magnificent courtyard of the Palais des Doges, some new films of remarkable artistic worth. Thus, in a sense the innate principles of the constitution of the "Mostra" and even of its title, were affirmed once again.

The agreements with the Cannes festival were not renewed after 1948, and this was a pity; they were not renewed because of the difficulties stirred up by the General Administration of Theatrical Shows. (This is the organisation which financed the festival and it had increased its control over the festival to the extent of transforming it into a business managed and directed by itself). Such interference does not help the Venice Festival. Of the various festivals which arose since the war, one — that of Locarno — is organised at the expense of the Swiss importers and distributors of films and of the pro-Locarno organisation.

The Festival of Marianske Lazne is, all in all, a product of the Czechoslovak government.

The Festival of Cannes is organised by a sort of special committee in which the French Government has a preponderating position. It is financed 60 per cent by the Government and the rest by the hotel-keepers and tourist organisations of Cannes and the Côte d'Azur.

The Belgian Festival was, in 1947, organised and financed directly, or almost directly, by the State and in 1949 exclusively by the Casino and the Corporation of Knokke-le-Zoute.

The "Mostra" of Venice is financed almost exclusively by the State and it was organised right up to 1948 by the offices of the Biennale. In 1949 without taking away its formal autonomy, the General Administration for Theatrical Shows has practically put the Festival under its own administration and placed it under the control of the Consultative Committee for the Cinema, a sort of little parliament of the Italian Cinema, presided over by the President and Under-Secretary of the Council Ministers and formed by the representatives of all categories of producers and workers in the film industry.

In this way, the Venice Festival is losing its super-national position to become nothing more than a manifestation of the Italian cinema industry.

In reality, the success of the Festival has never been tied to that of the Italian Cinema. One of the most brilliant periods of the Festival was precisely the pre-war one, a period of the most deplorable decadence of the Italian cinema.

The Festival must no longer depend on the Italian Cinematographic organisation, and a great State like Italy can and should know how to support the burden of a festival like that of Venice, without maintaining that the festival must serve directly, and before everything else, the interests of the Italian cinema, since it is useful to spread the fame of Italian civilisation.

Faust (Gérard Philippe) and Mephistopheles (Michel Simon) sign their pact in René Clair's *LA BEAUTÉ DU DIABLE*.

On the other hand, the contacts with Cannes and the other film festivals in Europe must be resumed in order to arrive at an understanding. Either the different festivals must be held in turn or arrange among themselves for specialisation. As for the Venice show which sprang from an artistic exhibition and which during the course of years has built up its own tradition, we would claim the right to present films which conform directly to a high and wide artistic concept.

And in addition, we should like in spite of a veto set up by an organisation of North American cinema producers, a veto whose observance prevents a participation which is not indispensable for the success of a festival, and still less for an exhibition of cinematographic art, the return of an international jury, like that usual at Venice until 1948. It would be still more necessary to return to it if the intention is not to duplicate the Grand Prix of Venice as the Mussolini Cup was for a while, in order to make more evident and more sure the sense of impartiality and chivalrous hospitality which are the traditions of the Venice Film Festival.

Count Elio Zorzi

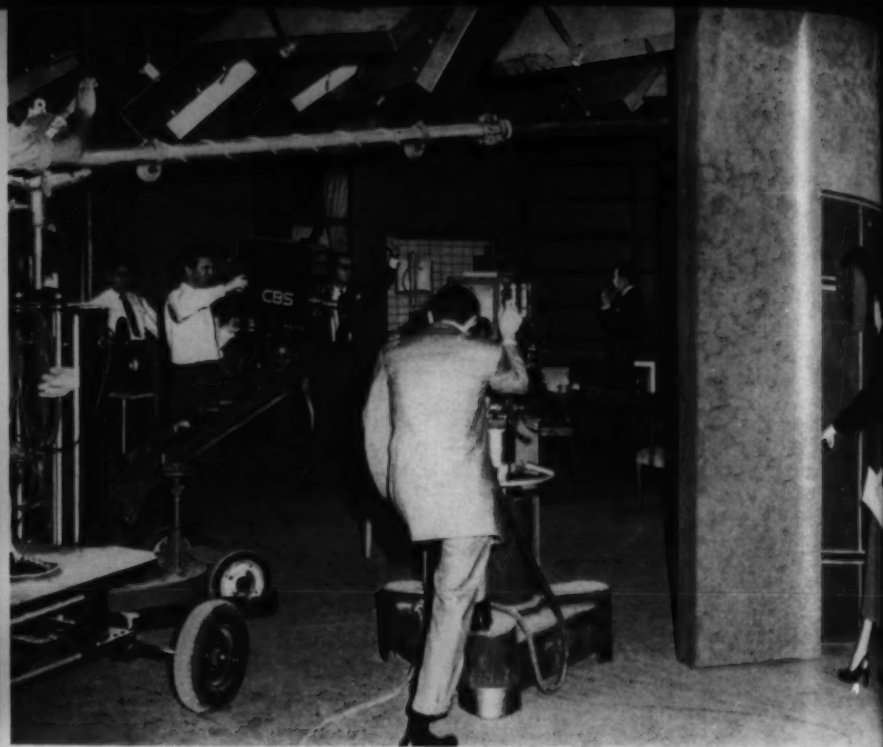
A Polish star, Irasema Dilian (left) and a French star, Françoise Rosay (right centre) appear in the tragedy *FEMMES SANS NOM*, brought to the screen by the Hungarian, Geza Radvanyi.



FILM-MAKERS FROM ABROAD IN ROME



Two million American Catholics follow the religious programme televised on Sundays.



Two cameras are used for televising a stage play from the diouls.

TELEVISION

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS



THE operator attached to Paul E. Victor's Greenland expedition (*Terre de Glaces*)....



....and with René Chanas in the Sahara (*Escadron Blanc*)

(PHOTOGRAPHS BY KINDNESS OF ETABLISSEMENTS ECLAIR)

WITH MODERN CAMERAS EXTERIORS CAN BE PHOTOGRAPHED IN ANY CLIMATE

A NEW KIND OF FESTIVAL IS NEEDED

So much fun has been poked at the multiplicity of film festivals that another joke on the theme would be redundant. Let me say simply that reading the honours list of festivals recalls irresistibly the delicious scene in *LE SILENCE EST D'OR* of the climber who is shattered by seeing his whole staff wearing the order which he has received from a prince. "When everybody's somebody, then no-one's anybody".

The remedy, according to some logical minds, is to take turns, one festival a year moving to Venice, Cannes, Knokke, even Locarno, successively. But anyone who has seen the brand-new palaces built especially for the Festival, knows that they are not yet ready to be abandoned.

In any case the fault is not in the number of festivals but in their monotonous sameness. Comparison is sometimes made between festivals and literary awards, with much credit for the fact that so few books receive prizes. It is a foolish comparison. Books have a public of thousands where films have millions. The aim is to develop the taste of several millions; several festivals a year are not too many for the task.

What the festivals may well envy the literary awards is their diversity. The film festivals duplicate their work. For years they have all been modelled on the pattern of the Venice Biennale which invented the formula. One is astonished at such poverty of invention. "The season's best film is Mr. X's" says Venice. "No it isn't, it's Z's" declares Cannes. It is enough to provoke an international incident — let alone inspire comedians. The only name which elicited international agreement was that of Figuerola.

The 1949 film vintage was poor. The distribution of the better films over several festivals had the result of making each selection still poorer. They say that necessity is the mother of invention, so that it may be hoped that the comparative failure of this year's festivals will make the organisers take the measures which they would have been wise to adopt in the years of the fat kine.

* * *

Renewal then is needed, but in what direction? That is for those responsible, Messrs. Ponti, Petrucci and Zorzi, Fourré-Cormeray and Fabre-Lebret, Vermeylen and Thirifays, to decide.

Meanwhile let me make a few suggestions on the subject.

Venice has naturally had recourse to retrospective exhibitions of the work of the great masters of the cinema so as to assemble them together. Could not this formula be improved to envisage exhibitions centred not in a man but in a theme? Just as we have

exhibitions of impressionist painting, or sea-scapes, so the festival might give us the work of the masters of realist films or of fiction, or any other type. The art of such exhibitions would consist in giving unpublished films their rightful place among known works so as to afford some interesting comparisons.

Then, too, the festivals of films for children need improvement.

* * *

Cannes, by its nature, reckons to be the most fashionable festival, the richest in stars. Why then not make it the "stars" festival? It should be understood that it would undertake each year to award a series of prizes only applicable to stars for various categorised qualities; for the actor who best identifies himself with his part; for the one who best clothes his part with his own personality; for presence; for the most photogenic; for craftsmanship; for beauty; and so on. It would be an excellent recipe both for attracting a large number of stars and for pleasing the producers. And it would be of service to the film world by producing some order in this mythology of fabulous beasts, by separating the wheat from the chaff and by presenting to the general public a means of distinction and a measuring stick which the illustrated film reviews have not afforded them.

* * *

Knokke was saved by the Festival of Experimental and Poetic Films. But as this relies largely on early productions it is doomed to exhaust its possibilities very quickly.

So we must look for a rejuvenation along other lines still, perhaps, in the peculiar atmosphere of the Belgian Festival which is by way of being a "working festival" as the interesting series of press conferences indicated. For instance, critics were unanimous in expressing this interest in Cayatte's comments on a few reels of *LES AMANTS DE VERONE*. Could not some ideas be drawn from this?

Another innovation could be a sort of "open forum" for films. Everyone who attends a festival expresses surprise at not seeing in it some of the excellent films being shown elsewhere. The films shown, of course, depend on the choice of the countries taking part, often swayed by economic considerations which the ideal festival should not have to worry about. By allowing a certain number of showings to films which their authors could send direct to the festival without submitting them to national selection boards, there would doubtless be an increase in the number of real discoveries which are all too rare at present. The

improvement in the quality of amateur films (there were some at Cannes which compared very favourably with professional work) has earned them the right to take part in an "open forum" of this kind. Obviously, this does raise a question of selection, but not an insoluble one.

* * *

The O.C.I.C. prize, an excellent idea two years ago, is losing its value proportionately with the festivals. And if I may be permitted to express a personal opinion, insistence on giving a prize at each festival seems to me bound to become a rather passive, almost parasitical, arrangement. Surely something more could be done for the "spiritual and moral betterment of festivals"?

Is it too ambitious to suggest an O.C.I.C. festival, one which would take its place within the framework of the larger competitions, as did the Children's Festival at Venice or the Experimental Festival at Knokke? Christians are chiefly interested in human affairs, so that the films shown should all stem from a vital theme, optimism and pessimism for example. Where the shows would differ from others would be in the discussion. It is a commonplace to see, after films of deep meaning, groups of critics discussing them heatedly and acutely. The festival debates would merely enlarge and formalise these discussions. The indispensable condition demanded would be quality

Since they represent a worthy doctrine, the makers of the films must attain an intellectual standing equal to that enjoyed in other fields by the *Semaines Sociales* in France. There would be a double advantage in such a procedure. The organisers would be able to define, adjust and adapt time-honoured conceptions for the most modern thought; and clearer ideas could be instilled into those taking part, the critics, the film company representatives, scenario writers and directors. For it would be desirable that the discussions should have the benefit of the opinions of authors and producers too, who would without any doubt be strongly attracted by serious discussion of basic things.

* * *

There is another suggestion. In spite of the publicity accorded to them, festivals do not reach the whole of the film world, since the public which attends the shows is a mixed and changing one. Might it not be a good idea, as well as the "closed shops" of the summer festivals, to have something of the sort in the form of "weeks" in winter and in the large towns and, working an agreed scale, make the public the jury and let them take part in the discussions? To take a concrete example, let us imagine a film week in an industrial city with the theme: „How is the worker portrayed in the films of France, America and Russia?" It would be an excellent means of popular education.

Jean De Bongnie

NOTES

ON THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF EXPERIMENTAL AND POETIC FILMS

(Knokke-le-Zoute 1949)

Though this year's festivals were more than usually numerous one has the impression that the "minor" festivals outshone the traditional manifestations.

At Venice the Festival of Children's Films was more significant than the Xth Mostra; at Cannes, the films shown by the French Cinémathèque were far ahead of the programmes proper to the IIIrd Festival. At Knokke-le-Zoute, granted that the arrangements of the Third World Festival of Film and the Fine Arts were irreproachable, the palm goes to a festival which sprang out of the Belgian Festival itself, namely the programme of "Experimental and Poetic Films", a vast and astonishingly coherent group developed by the Belgian Cinémathèque. In the little hall at the Casino we were able to see, or see again, films by Ruttman, Germaine Dulac, Man Ray, Marcel Duchamp, Fernand Leger, Luis Bunuel, Oskar Fischinger, Alexeieff, Pinschewer, Hans Richter as well as the recent works of McLaren, Veronesi, Emmer, Maya Deren, Len Lye.

About two hundred and fifty films were unrolled before our eyes; in principle, the *avant-garde* of the cinema. The most ambitious essays of the last thirty years. Altogether the most promising manifestations of the art of film . . . But what in fact are we to make of it all?

After one's first weariness, a weariness which one experiences without prejudice to the merit of the films, an examination of conscience is demanded. Regarded from a distance, such a programme of films, seen as a cluster compressed and telescoped by time, they present an aspect of plagiarism, of efforts to impress the natives, a certain hot-house atmosphere which consorts ill with their claim to fame.

Some seem to wish to have applied to film the saying of Alphonse Allais who "thanks to the progress of science hoped to be able to take the elasticity out of rubber"; there are humorists who leave their virgin film scarcely traced with the scratches and bumps of the vaseline used by the cleaners. Others shamefully parade their disgraceful discoveries. Yet others pretend to speak fluently in a surrealist jargon suitable for night schools.

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The "Avant-Garde" come out of this encounter with thirty solid films, works of authentic research ... which is a lot. Writers have no one to cite since Rimbaud and Joyce. The rest are but imitations. So with the film one is confronted with outpourings of mad dances, pseudo-paranoics, mischievous megalomaniacs. Between the real researches of an Oskar Fischinger and certain "experimental" films for reactionary youngsters there is really nothing of interest apart from a certain straining after originality.

A readjustment of values is demanded. The phoney genius is as undesirable as the worst of swindlers. For thirty years one has been in the habit of quoting films which nobody had ever seen on the screen and which in fact — as the light from a simple projector shows — are nothing but obstacles in the way of the avant-garde.

On the other hand the whole cinema is avant-garde.

A film by Hans Richter shows how the old ideas are trotted out anew. A little dusting, polishing, colouring, sweetening and then a touch of the passe-partout of surrealism to act as a confectioner's shop window together with a little freudism — American style — and there you have the well-known DREAMS THAT MONEY CAN BUY. But all this has got nothing to do with the avant-garde. It is but sterile and laborious hackwork. The avant-garde is to be sought elsewhere.

The sessions of Experimental and Poetic Films organised by Jacques Ledoux provided the most complete anthology hitherto collected. Let us list them in order. LA PERLE by Henri d'Ursel, OPUS III by Walter Ruttmann, ENTR'ACTE by René Clair, LE CHIEN ANDALOU by Bunuel, L'AFFAIRE EST DANS LE SAC by the Prévert Brothers, DIAGONAL SYMPHONY by Viking-Eggeling, L'IDEE by Masereel, THEMES ET VARIATIONS by Germaine Dulac, ANEMIC CINEMA by Marcel Duchamp and Brose Selay, EMEK-BAKIA by Man Ray, DER NÄHKASTEN by Julius Pinschewer, L'OEIL MAGIQUE by Jiri Lehovec, ETUDE No. 7 by Fischinger, UNE NUIT SUR LE MONT CHAUVÉ by Alexeieff, KOMPOSITION IN BLAU, ETUDE No. 9 by Fischinger, FAITS DIVERS by Claude Autant-Lara, LIGHT REFLECTIONS by James Davis, BIJOU by Francis Lee, L'AGE D'OR by Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel, L'ETOILE DE MER by Man Ray (with a curious setting that suggests Carné), BALLET MECANIQUE by Fernand

Léger (his stairway seems to cast a spell over the film), RHYTHMUS 1921, FILMSTUDIE, VORMITAGSSPUK by Richter, JEUX DE CHAPEAUX by Robert Desnos, LE SANG D'UN POETE by Jean Cocteau (a preface to LA BELLE ET LA BÊTE), CADET ROUSSELLE and POULETTE GRISE by McLaren, LE SACRIFICE DU SANG by Gosta Werner, OCH EFTER SKYMNING KOMMER MORKER by Rune Hagberg (a synthesis for all amateurs who ever dreamed of making a film), MELODIE DU MONDE by Ruttmann, ESSAIS DE COULEURS (3 and 6) by Luigi Veronesi, LES CARTES POSTALES by Luciano Emmer, A BRONX MORNING by Lay Layda, AMERICAN MARCH and ALLEGRETTO by Fischinger (rationalising his research into the irrational), AUBERVILLIERS by Eli Lotar, 5 FOR 4, CHANTS POPULAIRES and LITTLE PHANTASY (taken from Chirico who took it from Arnold Böcklin, who took it from the morgue at Venice) by McLaren, PRINCE ACHMET by Lotte Reiniger-Koch (in a rather painful and primitive manner), PACIFIC 23 by Jean Mitry, PALLE, ALONE IN THE WORLD by Astrid Henning-Jensen (these two films were also presented at Cannes), BOUNDARY LINES by Philip Stapp, ROBOTS by Deslaw, LOVE OF ZERO by Robert Florey (an ideal transposition of THE CABINET OF Dr. CALIGARI), IL ROMANZO D'UN' EPOCA by Emmer, LA PLUIE by Joris Ivens, LE MONDE DE PAUL DELVAUX by Henri Storck, LIMEHOUSE BLUES by Van Moerkerken, PSYCHE by Gregory Markopoulos.

An incomplete list, granted, but it gives a vivid idea of the efforts which the cinema costs those spirits who know how to explore the possibilities of the Seventh Art (according to Canudo) or the Tenth Muse (according to d'Annunzio). The most recent examples are by no means the best, with one or two exceptions. There is too much left to chance in a role which ought to be subject to inspiration. There is as much hazard in films in the case of those who use technique to excess, as there is in the case of those who know too little. This last point seems to us to be particularly true of colour films which are for the most part quite lacking in inspiration.

A selection of the films presented at the Festival of Experimental and Poetic Films at Knokke-le-Zoute ought to be used for an advanced course in Cinema Aesthetics. Whether they will or not, the suggestion is made.

Lo Duca

Decisions of the International Jury of OCIC.

The Jury of the International Catholic Film Office at the Xth International Exhibition of Cinema Art at Venice, 1949, have unanimously decided to award the O.C.I.C. Prix, offered to the film contributing most to the spiritual and moral betterment of mankind, to *CIELO SULLA PALUDE* (Maria Goretti), by Augusto Genina (Arx Films, Rome).

In the same sense, a Special Mention is attributed to *SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC*, by Charles Friend (Ealing Studios Production).

Among the many documentary films dealing with significant human problems, the Jury singles out the following as examples of films of special interest: *THE QUIET ONE*, by Sidney Meyers (U.S.A.); *REPORT ON THE REFUGEE SITUATION, JANUARY 1949* (Great Britain); *SENZA PATRIA* (Italy); *FRERES HUMAINS* (Switzerland). And also the following films inspired by religious Art: *LA PASSION SELON ST. MATTHIEU* (Italy); *L'EVANGILE DE LA PIERRE* (France); *VIEUX TESTAMENT* (Italy), as well as *LE TROUBADOUR DE LA JOIE* (France) the first attempt at teaching morality by means of animated cartoons.

The O.C.I.C. Jury is happy to note that films dealing with such religious and social problems have been admitted to the Festival among the other more spectacular, artistic and scientific films presented at Xth Biennale. In particular, the Jury welcomes the inauguration at Venice of a Festival of Films for Children and expresses the hope that the success of this experiment will encourage the production of films specially designed for the young.

The Jury hopes that these categories of films will always find a place within the programmes of the Festival and that in this way the cinema may be enabled to exercise as fully as possible its influence for the common good.

The Jury of The International Catholic Film Office:

President: Rev. John A. V. Burke (Great Britain).

Members: Domenico Caligo (Italy), Rev. Leo Lunders, O. P. (Belgium); Björn Rasmussen (Denmark); Piero Regnoli (Vatican City); André Ruskowski (Poland).

Venice, September 1st, 1949.

Giulo Cesare PRADELLA

Member of the International Jury for Children's
Films Venice

The first international Children's Film Festival

General public and film critics were equally pleased with the first International Children's Film Festival held at Venice. This was due to the number of countries who entered, and also to the high quality of the films shown. Great Britain, The United States, France, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Sweden and Italy all shared in the presentation seventeen films which were classed in three groups: those for the under sevens, those for children between seven and eleven, and those for children from eleven to fifteen. This was a common-sense classification depending on the mentality of the child, which, of course, differs according to age.

Thousands of children attended the Festival, and followed the films with a lively interest, so that it was possible to study attentively their reactions to the films, the sequences and the pictures which were presented to them on the screen. In actual fact, almost all the films had some moral or educational value and also technical and artistic qualities to satisfy the demands of childhood. This is an agreeable discovery, for as far as Children's Cinema is concerned we are only in the pioneer days — one might almost say in the primitive school.

The International Jury awarded the first prize to *ROSA DI BAGDAD* (The Rose of Bagdad), an un-

usually long Italian coloured cartoon, and bracketed with this was *THE THREE GIRLS AND THE LITTLE DOG*, a Swedish film in colour. In *The Rose of Bagdad*, in addition to artistic and technical merit, there was a human content which led to the glorification of maternal feeling. The film developed on the lines of a fable using the magical element to bring out the triumph of justice and good over evil and selfishness. L. Lunders pointed out with reason that not all the film is for children, but taken all in all, Domeneghini's work was very satisfying to the children. They even asked to see it again. Moreover, we are still in the experimental stage with this kind of film, and it is difficult to find something fully satisfying the child's idea of a film. We must remember that in *THE ROSE OF BAGDAD* all those collaborating were concerned to produce a work respecting the grammatical and syntactical rules of the cinema, and at the same time not entirely devoid of artistic worth, as for example at the end of the film, the sudden joy provoked by the triumph of justice. The other film *THE THREE GIRLS AND THE LITTLE DOG*, must be considered of less artistic and technical value, but it has a great advantage — it is executed *exclusively* by children and the story is told with that grace and delicacy which belong to the Nordic soul. The present writer helped to award the first prize to these two films, for the Swedish film has an educative value — it teaches children not only to love animals, but also that those who have lost their parents can always find good souls to help them.

In the group for children under seven the prize went to *ONE MORE RIVER*, an English coloured cartoon which was a pleasant story fantastically told, taken from Noah's Ark and pointed by the melody of a popular song. The same means were used in *CADET ROUSSELLE*, a Canadian film for children which puts the well-known song on the screen. Although this film was superior to all the others as a work of art, it was not adapted to the psychology of the child, and so it was awarded a special mention "out of class". The same thing happened to *PIMPINELLA*, a German film, because its story was not

readily intelligible to the children, perhaps because it was a silent film.

In the category seven-to-eleven *ZANZABELLE A PARIS*, made by Sonika Bo-Starevich, was justly awarded the prize mostly because of an excellent presentation in the first part of the film of a school which had the most lifelike animals for pupils, in a little village in the heart of Africa. The meaning of the story, not always sufficiently clear, was founded on the principle that peace at home is preferable to life anywhere else, even in a beautiful, inviting city like Paris. The film was made with rubber marionettes which were extraordinarily life-like.

The Italian film *MARINAI SENZA STELLE*, made by De Robertis, was perhaps the best of all the films shown, but it could not be awarded the Grand Prix because it was in the eleven to fifteen class, and so could only be awarded the prize for that group. De Robertis' production was excellent. The actors were children for the most part. The film exalted love of one's country, devotion to one's parents and friends, and made without doubt the greatest educative contribution of the whole series. With this film, Italy, although only beginning to make her presence felt in the realm of films for children, has shown that she can offer to the whole world works with a great educative value and the same time a high level of artistry.

Great Britain obtained two distinctions with *RIDERS OF THE NEW FOREST* and *TRAPPED BY THE TERROR*, attempts at period films for children, centred around the French Revolution and the Scarlet Pimpernel. The experiment was obviously successful, for the children trembled with anxiety for the heroes, whose courage and adventures were unparalleled. Needless to say, the heroes were children.

In conclusion, this first Festival has shown that it is absolutely necessary to encourage and develop children's cinema throughout the world, so that modern youth may profit from film made expressly for their education and entertainment, to the exclusion of everything capable of having a bad influence on them.

Enrico FULCHIGNONI

Professor of Psychology at the University of Rome

Filmology and Child Psychology

Experiments and research by filmologists in the realm of child psychology have achieved remarkable results. In this subject experimental work has hardly begun to take shape on a scientific basis, and it befits us to glimpse at the nature of such research and note some early results.

As argued lately by Wallon, one must tackle problems in this field with an eye to recent results obtained by child psychologists. Given that the subject for study is the child's reactions to certain situations or things, and that a film is just a new sort of situation presented in special conditions, it remains to be seen how this unfamiliar situation is absorbed by the child's mind.

The first step is to examine the perceptions and reactions of the child confronted by a film.

Without doubt the most important characteristic of a film is its universality; it is possible to present at the same moment and in widely differing places the same picture to the most diversified spectators. "What", asks Wallon, "will result from this contact of one film with varying types of spectators?" An increasing uniformity in human sensibilities, but progressing in what direction?

Moreover, a film is universal in another way; it can portray every kind of scene and give actuality to all. There again, with what results? To emphasise antipathies or to deepen sympathies, to dissociate or to unite, to differentiate or to blend, to reach or to awaken original aspirations in human hearts.

All these alternatives closely concern the problems of childhood and child-education.

Adult Films and Child Psychology

It is often said that films for adults are unsuited to children, and great efforts have been made to provide juvenile audiences with films thought to be adapted to their mentality. But by what criterion shall we judge their selection and their making?

Many mistakes have been made; for example it seems easy enough to offer children films which are merely quaint and fantastic — thanks to animated cartoons. But these have proved unsatisfactory; after seeing such cartoons a child of ten appears to be discomfited and upset which disproves the theory. Symbolism and naïveté of approach fail to make contact — probably because not adapted to the processes of the child's imagination.

There we have a characteristic example of divergence between the adult mind and that of the child. When the cinema is in question the results have been deplorable for only by methodical and scientific observation can be noted the tendencies of the young mind. Filmological research, as we know, examines systematically two categories of phenomena: filmic and cinematographic.

With what is the film concerned? It aims at expressing the life of the world and of the spirit, and inanimate things, by a defined system of combining natural and conventional images. Film imagery has been most thoroughly analysed by the Roman school of psychology, notably by Professor Ponzo, who has broadened the meaning of the term beyond the too rigid limits assigned to it by some expositors. The Film, then, may be defined as an objective reality — a language.

What, then, is the cinematographic province? Its business is, in its own way, to put into circulation among human beings a mass of sentiments aroused by the film.

In what sense can we say that films are a language? Considered simply as a means of expression the statement is true only in a specific sense, that is literally, and never in the sense of speech or thought. The imagery of the film has nothing to do with hieroglyphics or runes or alphabets. In a film the meaning and the thing pictured are one; it is significant of itself and by itself.

This characteristic of the film creates a problem for psychology; that of the cinematographic reaction may be expressed as follows: what is the psychological attitude of the spectator as a result of the film? I have already tried to explain (*Bianco e Nero* No. 9, Nov. 1948) how a pictured image operates differently according to the various situations therein and the manner in which they affect audiences, and how it may sum up many typical conditions of normal existence.

(1). The first of these attitudes is the realistic one. When walking in the street we are preoccupied chiefly with the practical effects of our actions, with their exterior bearing on things. One movement will cause us to jostle or to avoid a passer-by, another will save us from being knocked down by a car, and so on. With regard to those around us, these primary urges are important. We distinguish between men, women, children, friends, foes.

(2). As opposed to the realistic attitude and its secondary reactions are others — "beholder" ones — corresponding to that of the playgoer. In this state many of the secondary reactions disappear. We no longer are concerned with the material course of our walk. We take no heed to avoid a collision or to greet an acquaintance, but we do retain one group of secondary reactions — We are apt to share public sentiment to whistle or to applaud in company. This theatre-goer condition may be defined as a state of action wherein the secondary elements are incomplete and limited to a certain kind of personal conduct. This attitude excludes identification. Although reduced, control remains, is there on guard at a distance. Reality, far from being dimmed, becomes

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more important and complicated. The consciousness of outside objects remains.

During a performance the spectator keeps his identity, he plays with the object instead of being merged in it, and if he weakens his defences it is because he feels safe from all dangers.

(3). The third attitude — that created by the film, differs from the two preceding conditions.

The attitude of belief in the non-reality of the objects seen, although potentially continuous is not constant. At times the impression of reality is dominant. That is a situation excluding all complicity. It is barely an attitude. There is neither defence nor suspicion. One is unwary and imprudent, one is heedless, one loses one's ego which has hitherto acted as a vigilant sentinel. Whether there be question of the appearance or disappearance of the things and persons represented, the limited field in which they operate, their colour, their enlargings and their shrinkings, the apparent mobility of naturally immobile objects, everywhere in film situations are anomalies, exaggerations and contradictions of every day experiences.

Perception of filmed images in the adult and in the child

The splendid experiments made in the Michotte laboratory have opened many windows on these mysteries of perception: that, for instance (almost a miracle) of the coincidence of the impression of volume with that of the plane surface. For, undeniably, in the filmed picture we see volume: on the screen, the movements of the characters, their gestures, their changes of expression, down to the pictured reproductions of inanimate things lead even more efficaciously to a like result due to the wealth of photographic detail and the complex play of light and shade, aided, too, perhaps, to some extent, by similar experiences in the past. It is quite easy to verify this fact by suddenly stopping the unwinding of the film. The relief flattens immediately, the reality is lost and gives place to abstract volume like that of a simple drawing in perspective. (Michotte)

This phenomenon of perspective in connection with the effects of films on children has given rise to important observations by the Doctors Caruso and Albertini (cf. *Bianco e Nero*, No. 5, May 1949) at the Piaget Laboratory in Geneva. With the aid of questionnaires they have noted:

(1) Children's difficulty in interpreting the gestures and attitudes of characters.

(2) Difficulty in establishing exactly the position of characters in relation to a given object.

(3) A difficulty in identifying regular geometrical forms and even in recognising on a small scale familiar geometrical figures.

(4) Difficulty in accurately comparing size and similarity, even when the objects compared are looked at several times at close quarters.

These two authors wondered whether these difficulties are due to an incapacity to perceive clearly, to compare with precision, to interpret accurately when aided by a correct standard, or else to the speed of the presentation. In their opinion, children's errors proceed above all from the speed with which objects move on the screen.

It is extremely interesting to compare these results obtained through experimental work in child psychology with those shown by the first cinematographic experiences of primitive peoples. Madison (*Revue Internationale de Filmologie*, No. 3, 4th October 1948) believes that the eyes of adult western

peoples are accustomed to the conventional pictures of the screen. The pictures to such an eye are not stereotyped, but almost real, as we have said. Our mind, proceeding from the known to the unknown, completes the image. To the African, the known is a very different notion from ours, often so sharply defined. And even when the subject is familiar to him he is unused to the visual tricks of the Western viewer, which as already said, aid in giving reality to a pictured image.

Another factor, that of visual accommodation, is therefore necessary in order to interpret the details of a two dimensional reproduction of a stereoscopic picture. Those who have learnt to read have already acquired the art of adjusting the eye at a sufficient distance from the page in order to possess at a glance a group of words or even a whole line. Similarly, expert eyes accustomed to the screen have learnt to focus at a distance of some 30 cms. and thus perceive the image as a whole.

Primitive peoples, like the child, find much difficulty in assimilating the flat picture. Innumerable experiments have proved that they are especially sensitive to movement on the screen. It seems that the only details which they register are those belonging to objects or figures in motion, whereas the middle distance and background and stationary objects are almost unnoticed. Hence the introduction of movement is of great importance in educational films for primitive peoples, but such movement excites their imagination and must be used with prudence.

Let us consider the two chief types of movement on the screen: the movements within its limits — panoramic, horizontal and vertical, and the passing, via the reel, from one scene to another. In the first — the panoramic — the angle of vision of the projector is clearly evident. To the understanding of the primitive, as of the child, the movements of the projector determine the reactions to interpretations which are totally different. A horizontal panorama appears as an objective movement and not as a result of a subjective difference in the viewpoint of the spectator. A vertical panorama appears to the untrained eye as a disappearance upwards or downwards of the pictured object. This means that panoramic movement can be but rarely used in films made for people of limited visual experience. As to the mounting, if we are accustomed to frequent changes of photographic angle following consecutively in a sequence, the mind of the native and of the child has no means of interpreting these variations. In direction, research among primitive people and children shows identical results.

Naturally, the use of visual symbols which belong to the very grammar and syntax of a film, increases a child's difficulty in interpreting. A child — and a native — sometimes has his attention inexplicably distracted by some accidental or secondary detail. It is necessary, then, to prolong the presentation of really significant details so as to give them their rightful importance.

Accordingly — says expert opinion — the ideal technique in preparing films for young audiences is to strive for slower and more gradual transitions than are used in productions for adults.

The different stages of identification with social interests

In every way the cinematographic language differs for children and for adults. The double task of simplification and accentuation must be fulfilled in children's films with exact knowledge of a child's needs. According to the Wallon school of French psycholo-

gists the child of from 3 to 6 years old shows slow and uncontrolled reactions to a film; moreover, objectively is lacking, that is to say the sight of exterior things is constantly mingled with self-suggested impressions entangled with his own desires and memories which distract him more or less from the action unfolding on the screen. This kind of distraction seems inevitable with a film wherein the succession of images has the effect of irrevocability. What the child can perceive and apprehend will be nothing but a purely personal evocation which to the adult may appear absurd and incoherent. At this point the child is at the stage of *negative social interest*.

The next period, from 7 to 12 years, is one of increasing objectivity. However, the child cannot yet clearly distinguish the qualities of things. Nothing remains constant in an object if one of its properties is modified. One may well ask how he can recognise the object with all the shifting about, the alterations, the differences of scale which it suffers in a film. The problem then: how to conserve an identity in spite of changes is a fundamental problem of the cinema, since things cannot be shown in repose without suggesting the unreality and imperfection of the presentation.

When the child reaches the age of puberty his perceptions are identical with those of an adult. But at this stage arise the complications of tastes and tendencies; it is only now that the action shown in a film acquires its full importance. The child faces problems suggested by his new needs and desires; these are no longer simply individual, but tend to include his family and his fellows. The child can grasp an ever-increasing range of themes from the merely adventurous to the sentimental and so on to the most abstract of social implications: authority and the interdependence of individuals. Subjects become varied and more subtle. The child's understanding matures. He is co-ordinated and complete. It is only now that the cinema becomes a language to the young spectator.

Reactions evoked by films

Original research at the Rome Institute of Psychology deals with another most important aspect of the problem: that of the emotional reaction to films. The two-fold results are of exceptional interest — One concerns the study of emotions from the angle of *modification* of personality. A film can influence habits and arouse many powerful emotional reactions: fear, pleasure, sympathy, antipathy, disgust, enthusiasm. These sentiments may be the more easily observed in the light of the considerations already offered on the state of individual consciousness during the showing of the film. Elsewhere, the ordinary spectator tries to regulate and control his emotions so as to be ready for the reality which may intervene at any moment. At the theatre one is aware of the feelings of those around us, thus our reactions are modified for social considerations, by an inherent control. In contrast, the condition of a spectator in the cinema partakes of the hypnotic conditions around him: the obscurity, the rhythmic movement of sequence, the contrasting brightness of the visual stimulus. There we have three elements which endow this new reality with all the characteristics of hypnosis. Herein the emotional reactions, freed of all control and safe from interference by the somnolent critical faculties, allow themselves full liberty to display a strength and scope of expression which would be of abundant interest to an analytical study of emotivity.

In recent years experiments have taken place in English psychological laboratories — unknown to the young audiences — by means of camouflaged apparatus, and the results so obtained have confirmed absolutely the strength of the emotional output during the showing of a film in normal conditions. These experiments have been concerned chiefly with the child's tendency to mimicry and pantomime, but other phenomena have been registered efficaciously and conclusively. In a study of the variations in the respiratory curve during a film, the author of this article has, at the Institute of Psychology in Rome, demonstrated the close interdependence between the number of the successive stimuli on the screen and the rhythm of respiration. The subject breathes at a certain rate when the rhythm of projection is 24 frames per second. If the same scene runs at a speed of 16 the subject modifies his breathing so markedly that the respiratory graph looks quite different. Thus is it possible by studying the most elementary reflexes such as the respiration to measure exactly the reactions to a visual stimulus, and to obtain absolute confirmation that the spectator, during even a short film is emotionally affected to a much greater degree than by a real event or a scene on the stage.

1949 FESTIVALS

THE QUIET ONE

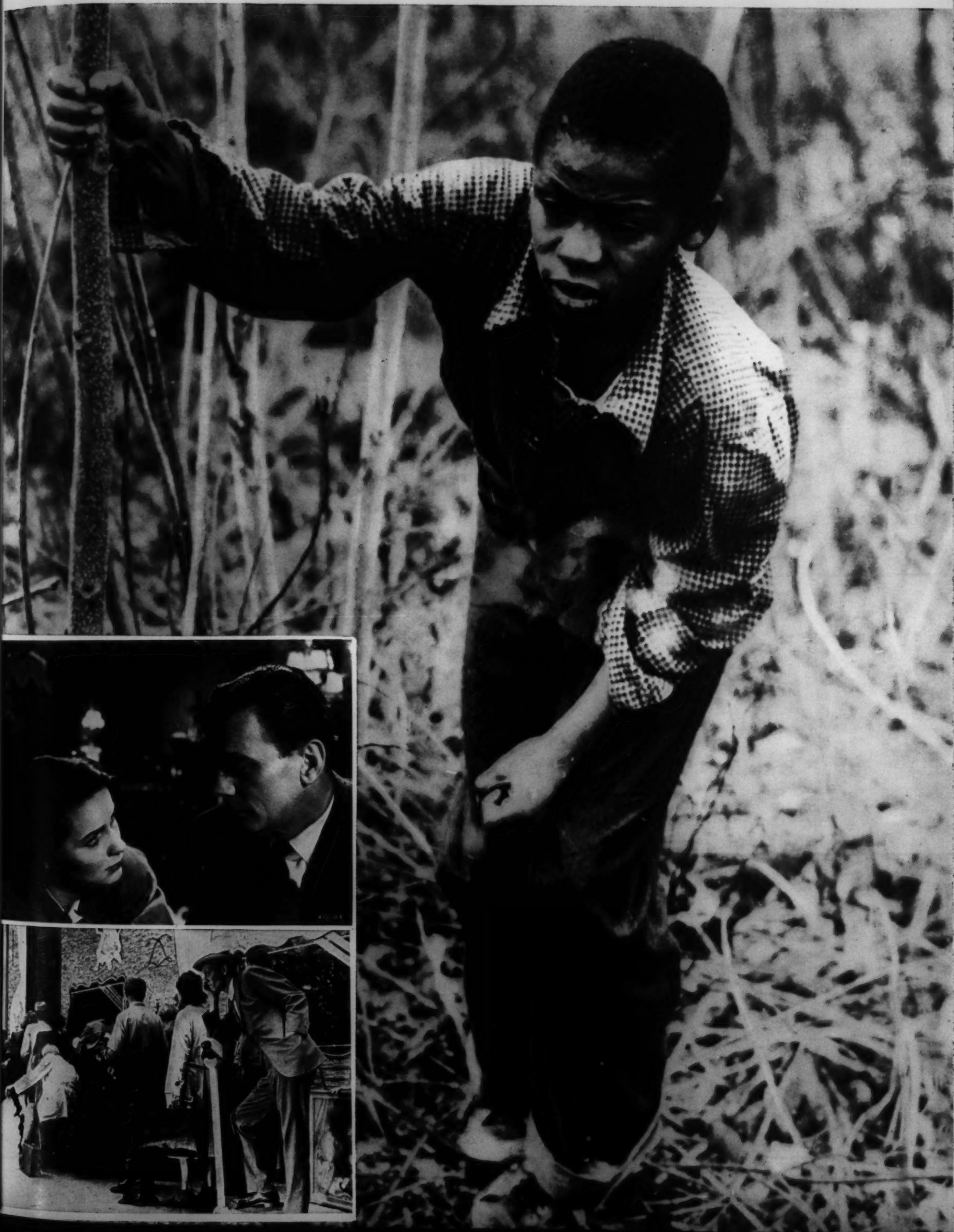
(U. S. A.)

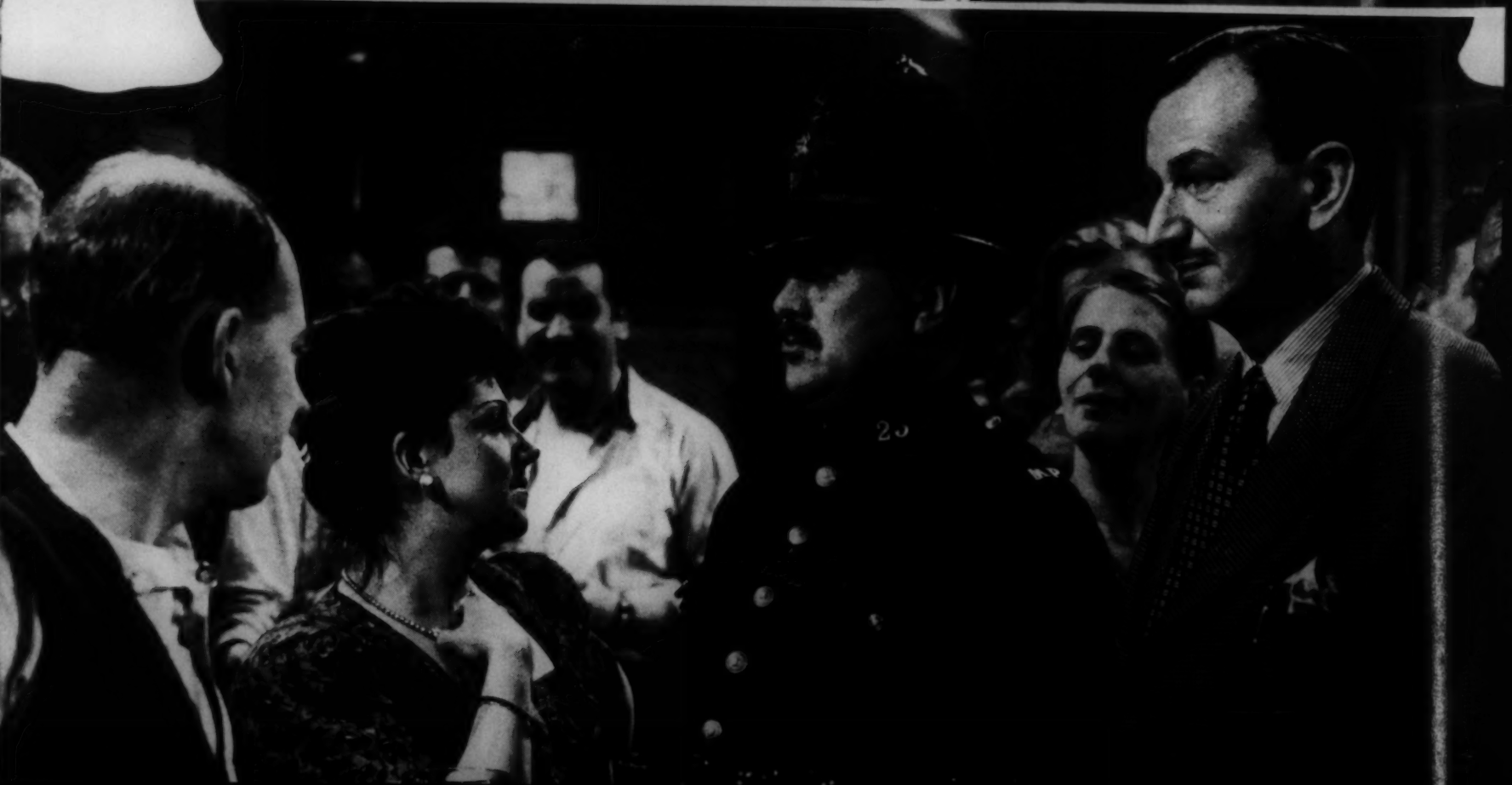
THE THIRD MAN

(Great Britain)

BERLINER BALLADE

(Germany)





1949 FESTIVALS

Pierre FRESNAY and Georges MARCHAL

in

AU GRAND BALCON (France)

Edward G. ROBINSON, winner of the prize for the best actor at Cannes for his performance in

HOUSE OF STRANGERS (U. S. A.)

The British sense of humour:

PASSPORT TO PIMLICO

(Great Britain)

We have then, in films, a very delicate instrument for analysing emotions, and no other means known to the psychological laboratory is so effective, especially in regard to the domination of the critical faculty.

These researches open up new vistas to psychology. It would have been interesting to examine them, but it is sufficient here to hint at their possibilities and so demonstrate the complexity of the problems and the diversity of information required for their study if scientific conclusions of real value are to be reached.

Enrico Fulchignoni

S

Gaetano CARANCINI

Film critic "La Voce Repubblicana"

Exec. Cttee, "Fédération Italienne des Ciné-Clubs"

Exec. Council "Sindacato Nazionale Giornalisti Cinematografici Italiani"

CHILDREN'S FILMS IN ITALY

Last year, when I told my young friends of the Italian edition of "Junior" about the setting up of an international organisation designed to facilitate the exchange of films for children, I addressed an invitation to Italian producers to get to work on the making of educational films for the young. My appeal was based on the moral necessity of giving our children a *healthy cinema*, and also on the commercial

advantages such a project could offer. In effect, more than half of Italy's 10,000 cinema halls belong to parishes or educational bodies, which fact renders it all the more surprising that until now no one has thought of making use of so vast a potential distribution circuit.

At the time of writing, however, there has been no response from the producers and there is still no

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production for children as such, with the exception of the activities of Pagotto and Domeneghini (makers of the feature length animated cartoons) FRATELLI DINAMITE (Dynamite Brothers) and LA ROSA DI BAGDAD (The Rose of Bagdad).

We have an inheritance from the Cinémathèque Scolaïre, directly dependent upon the Ministry of Public Instruction, but these are only short films, of essentially popular appeal, and in much need of renewal. Consequently they cannot be relied upon to "nourish" the circuit which, for brevity's sake, we shall call *educational*. Its only source of supply is the general distributor, from whose offerings films suitable for children have to be chosen. It is, therefore, incorrect to speak of children's films: the halls use as their criterion "beati monoculi in terra coecorum": in other words, they show works which are *not harmful*, as opposed to films with a *positive aim*.

Nevertheless, from this aspect our country compares favourably with others. For instance, children under twelve are legally permitted to work in film studios, subject, naturally, to all proper precautions, so that it would be perfectly possible to undertake the production of children's stories in which the actors would be the same age as the characters created by the author, instead of being, as is the case in England, young looking fifteen year olds. Mr. Parker, who was in charge of the special section for

children's films at the Venice festival, told me that children are fully aware of such an expedient, and that, no matter how engrossing the story may be, they are apt to look upon it as a swindle at their expense.

Another advantage which Italian producers could enjoy is provided by our national artistic heritage: the finest examples of architecture, painting and sculpture are within their reach, and it would be a simple matter to set up a specialised production of artistic shorts of popular appeal which would be in considerable demand in foreign countries.

Children are very fond of animated cartoons: Pagotto and Domeneghini have now perfected their equipment, achieved technical mastery and are now triumphantly out of the experimental stage. Here again, advantageous exchanges could be effected with other countries which have stocks of such films.

It is clear, then, that ideal conditions exist for the making of children's films. The only need is for those who invest exclusively in popular production to become alive to this fact. If they are convinced that, at a lower cost, such specialised production is certain to bring in good returns, they will also be doing something of value. We appeal, therefore, to the film magnates speedily to enable Italy to take her place with other countries in this field.

Gaetano Carancini

Sonika BO

Founder/Director of the Cinderella Cine-Club,
Author of the film for children: *Zanzabelle in Paris*

CINEMA GROWN-UPS AND CHILDREN

We give children education, libraries, sports, but amusements are also very important and nobody thinks of that.

Paris has one children's theatre which changes its programme twice a year. There is also the circus which presents two different shows a year, making in all four days' entertainment, which is not very much. Children adore the cinema and there is no reason why they should be deprived of that joy. Obviously it is a very difficult task to realise, for two important things are lacking: no films for children are made and there is no theatre free in the afternoons.

In 1932 I founded a Cinderella Club in Paris and it was with great difficulty that I managed to find films suitable for children.

Today, after years of search, I possess a very fine film-library made up of 'shorts' specially chosen for children: beautiful documentaries on flowers and animals, travel and sport, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, puppet films, cartoons etc. The whole is compounded, "prescribed", and perfectly suited to little girls and boys between the ages of 6 and 12.

I introduce each performance with an explanation of the films in order to teach them to under-

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stand and love the cinema. After each performance there is a singing competition and prize-giving.

I go all over France and the entire world with my films, achieving a huge success.

At Cannes, for the first time in the world, I organised a real Festival for children, made up of international films. France, Russia, Great Britain, Czecho-Slovakia and America competed. At the Brussels Festival and at the Biennale of Venice, Poland, Canada and Sweden also took part.

Under the auspices of *Unesco* I also presented a selection of films for children before an audience of 600 foreign delegates and 1,000 children guests. There was tremendous excitement in the hall, once again making plain the importance and necessity of recreational films for little children.

Fifteen hard years have passed; production must be considered. Films for children must be made — that is the universal opinion. But the State has not budgeted for such expenditure, and producers are confident in advance that such production cannot be commercially successful.

How can they tell, since up to date nothing has been accomplished in this field? On the contrary, as soon as there are films specially conceived and made for children, there will certainly not be wanting exhibitors to recognise their own interests in screening such programmes on Thursday and Sunday mornings; moreover, they will be doing business during the slack hours and making sure of publicity among the parents, their evening clientele.

A committee of censors for children's films has been set up. I ask myself what they can have to censor since there are no children's films. Scenario competitions are organised. I am very sceptical and do not believe the production question will be solved in such a way. Committees and competitions are good when active work really exists. The urgent, paramount need is for short films on different subjects.

Also, after building up a library of films from every country, films of a kind to interest children, I now want to set on foot the first French programme specially made for children. I adore children and the cinema and am sure that I am in the right, and nothing in the world can discourage me.

I have just completed three films: *LA VACHE DONNE DEUX CHOSES*; *ELLE EST CHEZ ELLE*; and *ZANZABELLE IN PARIS* produced and drawn by L. Starevitch, a success worth drawing attention to, for this film has just carried off the first prize at the 1949 Venice Biennale.

Music by Jean Wiener completes this little masterpiece for which nothing has been neglected on the futile pretext that "it's for children, they don't understand" — the habitual opinion of those who know nothing about children. On the contrary, there are no more exact, just and sincere critics than children, and to understand them you have simply to love them. I believe that in this field neither psycho-analysis nor research will lay bare children or gain their confidence. You must go to them with open heart and arms.

Children like logical, simple things: beautiful pictures from life. The fantasy offered them by grown-ups leaves them indifferent; they live in their own much more fantastic world. Children are afraid of grand ideas and are not sufficiently attentive to follow panoramics. They appreciate beautiful shots and notice the music.

Apart from the children, there is still the question of the parents. When a child is given an electric train, it is father who plays with it, if a lovely doll, it is Mamma who dresses it and the child is punished for annoying its parents when they are playing with its toys. It is the same with public entertainments. Parents drag their children to adult films in the evening, but if by chance there is a film show for children they do not like taking them: they get bored because the programme is not their "age".

Since the foundation of the *Cinderella Club* in Paris, I can say that the film education of "my children" is complete, for the kids themselves want to go to the programmes designed for them. There remain the parents. It is a matter of urgency to form teams of active young people in every country who will bring into being cinemas for children, with programmes of quality. Grown-ups often abuse the confidence of children and even before the birth of a general movement for children's films, programmes in very poor taste have already been shown labelled "for children". Up to now, obviously, the films have been lacking. However, it is sufficient for each country to make two films annually for us to be able to complete our respective programmes by exchanges.

Children's films are international. I have proved it repeatedly in my travels: from nordic Denmark to tropical Africa, children laugh and cry at the same places, even if they do not understand the foreign language, the picture is enough.

I am convinced that there is a great future for children's films. A Swiss journalist has said in an article: "Sonika Bo has laid the first stone of child-

ren's cinema, and she shines upon the whole world". I am very flattered, but I am more modest. I hope to leave in the soil of every country through which I pass with my selection of children's films,

a tiny seed and to see it grow, thanks to you, into a fine plant; all the world's children will come and pick the lovely fruit we offer them.

Sonika Bo

Nerin E. GUN

Chief correspondent to Canadamondial of New York

TELEVISION'S GIANT'S STRIDES

In New York, as in certain American cities within receiving range of the immense American television field, a strange phenomenon occurs almost every day at tea-time. The children, who until then had been infesting the streets and gardens, playing about in the portable swimming-baths scattered about here and there, shooting each other from windows with their atomic guns and water-machine-guns, mysteriously disappear: the tumult ceases, street and garden are deserted, and out of doors as within a really astonishing peace reigns. For the children take it in turns to meet in each other's houses and will stay still and quiet for two long precious hours. Mother has nothing to do but give them their little sandwich and glass of milk, and can go and relax in the park if she feels so inclined. Her children are quite safe, entranced by the television screen.... The real problem only begins when they have to be dragged away and set down to their homework.

This profound transformation of American habits due to television is noticeable not only among the children: it affects every level of the population. Young people prefer television to the cinema, parents are glad to be able to stay at home in the warmth or coolness according to the time of year, and owners of sets find their friends and acquaintances flocking to them. Television has made possible a return to family life.

To deny the astonishing progress of television and to deny that, within a comparatively very short space of time, it will assume exceptional importance and revolutionise modern life, would be proof of foolish and useless blindness. Rivalry between film and television in the American

States has already been settled in favour of the latter. The cinema will become a secondary art in the service of television and will owe its continued existence to it. Which does not mean that the cinema will be killed. On the contrary, it will develop in proportion to the development of television, just as the gramophone-record industry developed with the progress of wireless.

Television is not simply retransmission of films. It is something much more and quite other. Television is a living newspaper: political, social, society, and religious events occupy a much more important place therein than the mere transmission of film or theatre shows: sports commentaries, although their popularity seems ephemeral, have revolutionised the idea of «sport» among the mass of the people. Political speeches, interviews with men in the public eye, open forums, the opinion of the man in the street, on-the-spot relaying of great occasions, of parliamentary sittings, of dramatic happenings such as a disaster or a riot, above all, regular programmes of religious ceremonies which enable one, for instance, to assist at High Mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral Christmas night, a thing which would otherwise have been out of the question for the mass of the two million Catholics who followed it on the screen, sermons and almost daily talks — all this creates a notable transformation in the life of the average American. True, the New Yorker finds this difficult to appreciate. But for the New England or Illinois farmer, who has rarely occasion to go to the neighbouring town, the upheaval is proportionate.

I could quote endless examples: suffice it to say that the Archbishop of New York has had to warn the faithful that the viewing of religious

transmission did not exempt them from the obligation to assist at Mass «actually». Evidence of the importance of these broadcasts.

Television is, besides, continually enlarging its field of action: it will soon be installed in schools and universities, making possible the following at a distance of even the most scientific courses. I was, in fact, allowed to watch demonstrations of colour television, which makes possible the viewing of a surgical operation. A medical student can follow the method of procedure much more closely than if he were in the operating-theatre. The system will also enable a great surgeon to supervise remotely on his screen an operation performed in a distant town by a less experienced doctor and thus give him almost instantaneous instructions.

Everyone interested in the cinema owes it to himself to take these facts into consideration and, above all, to face this new mode of expression from now on with optimism. For television needs the experience of film-directors and actors and will give work to many more people than the world film industry ever did. Television will need thousands of films, and, above all, very good films. This need holds out infinite possibilities which, far from signifying a decline in the art of cinematography, will mark a new, dynamic and definitive orientation.

A few figures will allow me to prove the point beyond dispute. In America production of receiving-sets rose from 30,000 a month in January, 1948, to 290,000 a month in May, 1949. It will reach 500,000 a month next January with the introduction of colour. Whereas at the moment there are two million sets in use, it is hoped that by 1954 the figure of 20 million set-owners will have been reached, making a total of 80 million viewers. Whereas at present 62 transmitting stations are in operation, this number will reach 350 next year as soon as the Federal Commission has granted the necessary authorisations. The majority of these stations are interconnected by a so-called co-axial underground cable, which allows of the simultaneous retransmission of the same programme. In a few months this cable will link New York and Hollywood. Whereas to begin with television was a rich man's amusement, today 40% of viewers are working-men. A good set costs about two weeks' working-class pay, round about 150 dollars. The sale of television sets occupies fourth place in the American

economy, surpassing that of vacuum-cleaners and ice-boxes, those typical products of the American home, and equals half the sales of radio sets.

Far from losing interest after the first six months, viewers are keener than ever: they stay at home about five days a week, whereas before owning a set they did so on an average only three days of the seven....

The greatest effect is naturally in advertising: all American television is financed by advertising and all the stations are privately owned. It is thanks to this system that New York now possesses seven transmitting stations with programmes lasting from 8 in the morning to midnight and later. This publicity, which constantly repeats the same pictures and the same frequently trite themes, is not without great drawbacks. But it also compels sponsors to present ever more attractive programmes, for the television public is becoming more and more exacting and is quickly bored, much more quickly than by the radio or at the cinema. On the other hand, the publicity influence of the visual image is vastly greater than that of the radio. I need only cite the programme of certain big New York department stores which every morning present to the housewife dresses, hats and accessories on sale that day: few women miss this show and sales of the goods thus displayed far surpass those of all the others advertised in the press or on the air.

It is clear that this giant's-stride advance ought to make us, here and now, consider the moral orientation of television: its influence on the child is undeniable: he may forget a talk on the wireless or even do his homework while listening to it. But he has to give the whole of his attention to television, and the picture makes a deep impression on his mind. With the wireless he is free to create his own characters: but not so with television, which makes life concrete, which in a certain sense gives precise form to this imagination. Here is an educational theme requiring deep and serious study. Similarly the influence of television upon adults, whether by political broadcasts or retransmission of events, or again of plays and films, demands our appreciation of the new standards and our immediate concern to turn this new art to the good. For television enters into the family: *it reaches every member of the household simultaneously*. The experience of America is conclusive: an international television service must be set up at once.

A. E. RICHARD

*Ex-President of the Motion-Picture Camera Operators,
Paris*

Something new in motion-picture cameras

Until recent years, operators and motion-picture camera technicians admitted that a portable machine was destined chiefly for reporting work and for certain news-reel-type shots inserted in artistic films.

It was in accordance with this conception that the greater number of portable cameras were made. Thus it came about that many operators were unable to make use of them for want of means of adapting them to their needs.

Were it necessary to determine exactly the reasons why these cameras were satisfactory in only a small number of practical cases, it would be enough to ask oneself why, even in reporting, one still finds other than automatic-type cinecameras in use. Nevertheless it is a fact, the proof of which is that until the appearance of the camera to be described later in this article, the world market lacked an outfit capable of being used for reporting, documentaries, and art films. Apart from these, each entirely distinct categories of work, the machine is used for the scientific and industrial control of permanent, temporary or accidental phenomena such as: the recording of the dial movements of the instrument panel of an aeroplane in flight, an engine in action etc. . . . The use of an automatic camera for numerous shots of parts of sequences in an artistic film can be better understood if it be considered that it is now possible to shoot scenes without using sound, to repeat these scenes and synchronise them exactly with their acousting setting.

But to do this, one condition is absolutely necessary:

"The picture must never be inferior in quality to that produced by the heavy studio-type camera".

Many cineasts, indeed, while recognising the primary place of the visual element in the compound "sight-sound", the putting together of which is the realisation of sonovisual art, appreciate having at their disposal an outfit answering the multiple problems set by motion-picture cameras.

The ideal motion-picture camera is one which is:

- 1) Light and mobile
- 2) Practical
- 3) Exact
- 4) Loads instantaneously in as short a time as possible

- 5) Can be brought into action anywhere in any position, even on a chance support.

Among the new models offered us by designers, the French "Cameflex" machine (COUTANT-MATHOT patent) possesses the qualities enumerated above. It is light, since it weighs stripped, only 2 kilogs. 450. With its optical system, loader and 120 m. of film as well as the electric motor, its weight is 6 kilogs. 380.

The general shape of the machine, designed for practical adaptation to the human body, automatically does away with the greater part of the weight during use, on the shoulder of the operator.

OPTICAL SYSTEM

The focal range of the camera is from 24 m/m to 500 m/m.

A) The "Cameflex" is the only reflex automatic machine in the world capable of receiving a short focus of 24 m/m.

B) It is the only which can simultaneously set the 24 m/m focus and a very long focus without danger of the wide field of the 24 m/m revealing the lens-mount of the long-focus objective. Conf: illustration ¾.

C) Control of the optical system, stationary or in action in every position, is effected by "reflex" sighting of exceptional range.

D) Shutter-speed can be regulated between 40 and 200 degrees.

The perfect luminosity of the "reflex" system of sighting, combined with the ability to vary the shutter-speed, makes it possible to avoid stroboscopic effects, such as, for example: the wheel of a carriage stopping or turning in the wrong direction.

E) The "Cameflex" is a camera fitted with loaders. In fact, automatic loaders of 120 m. or 30 m., previously filled with film, fit on to the front of the machine in a fraction of a second simply by pressing with the hand. Thanks to this revolutionary system the operator on the scene of the shooting is relieved of the preoccupation of manipulating film and can even replace a finished loader by 120 m. of unexposed film in next to no time without stopping the motor.

F) The camera can be mounted on a platform which fixes itself instantaneously on a light metal foot capable of supporting easily a load of 100 kilogs.

N E W T E C H N I Q U E S

Thanks to a special device the camera can be attached or suspended in a few seconds to the front of a car, the branch of a tree, some piece of metal work, to a window, to scaffolding etc.

One of the advantages of the machine is the absolute steadiness of the pictures, in spite of the fact that it has no stabilising claws.

Study of the stability of pictures had hitherto led technicians to believe that a cinematographic picture, destined to linear enlargements of more than 400 times, ought to be accurate to within 1/200th of a centimetre and that this is possible only on condition of being stabilised with claws combined with an alternative pressure-frame.

This solution has not been adhered to by the inventors, who have shown that the orthodox theory is not infallible, since the "Cameflex" has neither an alternative pressure-frame nor stabilising claws.

The absolute steadiness of the pictures is assured by a patented system made up of a sharp-focus pressure-plate and a guide pressure-frame. These pressure-frames are mounted on the automatic loaders containing the film. Each loader has thus the two fore-mentioned frames. There is no question of claws. The result, contradicting every orthodox formula, is that —

- 1) The pictures are steady;
- 2) There is no trace of scratches;
- 3) Speed variation is *very great*.

This last quality is valuable in a machine intended for work in all latitudes. It has been proved many

times as well in hot countries, for instance for the Leon Poirier film LA ROUTE INCONNUE in the burning sand-storms of South Morocco, as in cold, particularly at the time of the Paul-Emile VICTOR expedition to Greenland.

In these two extreme cases, the "Cameflex" always gave its users complete satisfaction.

The running of the mechanism and of the film is assured by a very compact electric motor of 6/8 volts which acts as a handle to the machine. A battery, housed in containers on a leather belt ensures the running of 1200 metres of film without recharging, and can be very easily recharged thanks to a recharger-transformer included with the equipment.

A clockwork motor unreeling 15 metres can be quickly substituted for the electric, and it is also possible to turn by hand thanks to a gear-box giving 1, 8 and 16 pictures to each turn of the handle.

All filters, neutral or coloured, between glass or on gelatine leaves can be used as well as the classic diffusers.

Many other advantages can be noted, but would bring us into technical regions rather arid for this article which aims only at drawing the reader's attention to a camera which puts at the disposal of cinematographic art a practical instrument, convenient and accurate, the winner moreover in 1948 of the *International Technical Grand Prix* at the Venice Biennial.

A. P. Richard

3

WORLD PANORAMA

BY OUR PERMANENT EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENTS

ARGENTINE

The Position of the Italian Cinema

Unbelievable as it may seem, ideas of a disturbing puerility on the "surprising" quality of Italian post-war films have spread in many quarters in the Argentine, Uruguay and Latin America generally. In complete forgetfulness that Italy has a thousand-year old culture and that in matters of art she has always shown new paths to be followed, her film productions have been received with an astonishment which borders on hostility.

Accustomed to the pre-eminence of Anglo-Saxon films, Latin audiences had become set in the idea that only Hollywood and London could make films of quality, with perhaps Paris, whose films appealed to the chosen few, in the third place.

It is a point of view which does little credit to the population of this part of the hemisphere, which for obvious reasons should consider its Latin heritage with legitimate pride, and get rid of its inferiority complex at being the sons or grandsons of emigrants, and short-sighted at that. The memory of his working class ancestry annoys the ill-educated *nouveau riche* who, in his bookless house, smiles rather patronisingly — in a desperate effort to deceive himself — at the mention of Italian names, whose owners, through an evaluation as superficial as it is erroneous, are considered inferiors. The writer has heard quite unpleasant comment on the probable family history people with names like Alfieri and Giovanelli, the speakers being ignorant of the fact that these names appear in the Gotha Almanach, which includes the cream of international aristocracy with the very rare persons who are privileged to enjoy the title Royal Highness. It is hardly necessary to say that these scornful citizens belonged to a plutocracy which, in cultured European circles, would have been considered rather comic.

When Italian films first arrived in Latin America, people relied for their judgement of them on the intellectual bankruptcy of certain emigrants, already set in an established tradition, who in spite of their own shortcomings found in them extraordinary merit worthy of the purest elements of their race. Once these critics had started, the epithet "realist" was applied to the Italian cinema, as if that were almost its sole quality. The word "realism" was used to include any favourable detail that was discovered in the films.

This reveals a lamentable and culpable ignorance of everything Italian. Any film from the United States or from England may show actors who play their parts with an undeniable simplicity. All the same, their message is limited to a certain public which is not the case with that which comes from Italy. The same remark can be applied to sectarian religious. One day, when I had gone into the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Buenos Aires, the person who came to welcome me spoke to me in English, in spite of my obvious national type. I was in a temple which belonged to a group.

Anyone who goes into a Catholic church, in no matter what country it is, can hear his own language

spoken and make his confession to a fellow-countryman. If he is from the East, he will see the liturgy preserved intact. Paradoxically the true Church contains in its universality the seeds which permit her to adapt herself to all the characteristics of sturdy nationalism.

It is no geographical reason that has made our Church Catholic and Roman. Rome has always been the symbol of universality. St. Paul's "Do all things for all men" has been especially understood by the Italians. The faculty for adaptation of the bands of Italian immigrants who have settled all over the world is well known. Their aptitude for identifying themselves with the most diverse countries is no mere chance and cannot be given a simple explanation. Nick Quatrocchi, the son of a Genoese, is very much an American. Jorge Pelliani is a hundred per cent Argentine, though he was born in Lombardy and has only been in Buenos Aires for five years. Olaf Gerrardi does not look like a Scandinavian but would willingly die for his beloved Norway. One could find Bernolleggi and Potenze whose first names are Kotaro and Lin-Yu.

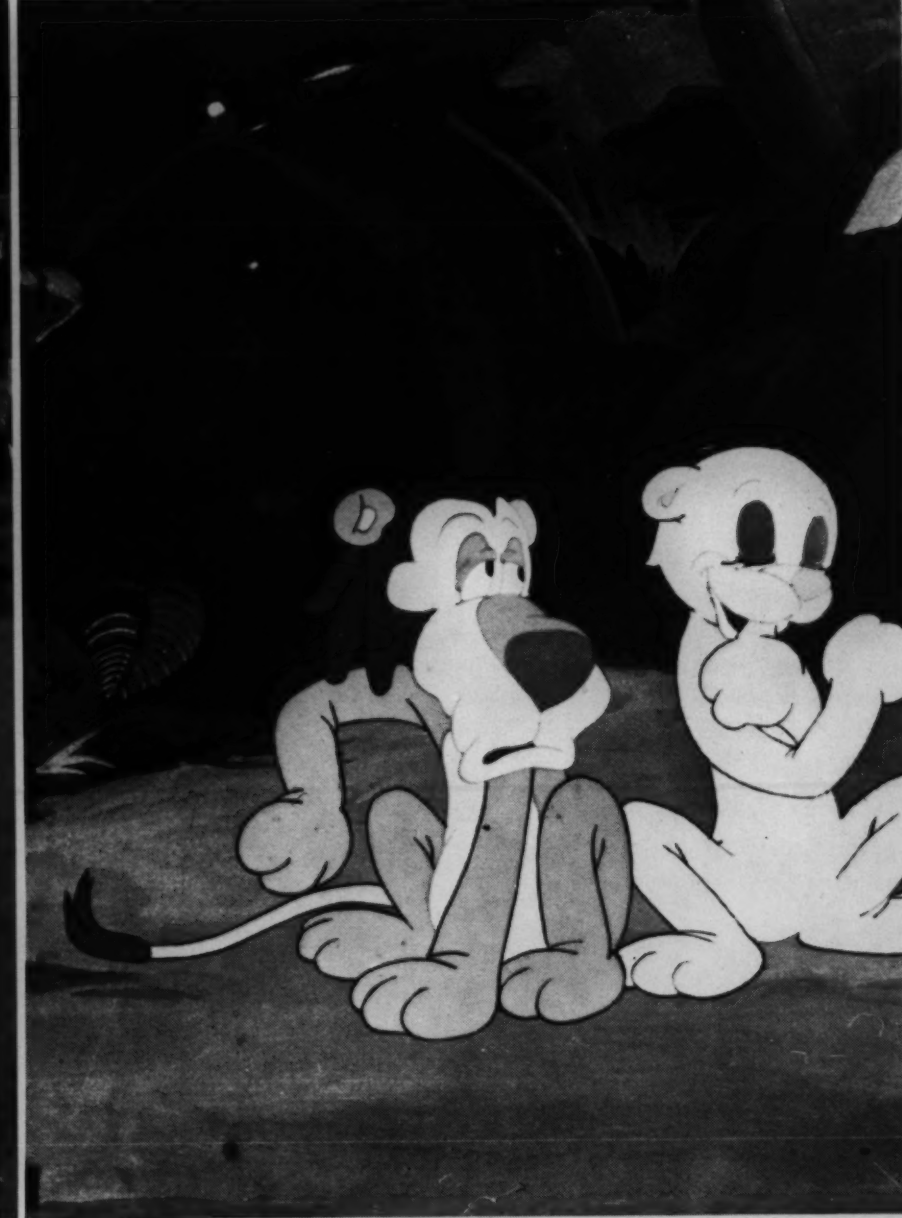
This adaptation can be explained by the sincere understanding and love of one's neighbour which are true characteristics of Catholics. By a special grace of God, the Italians have characteristics which attach them to Christianity in a way which is to be envied. The custom in Anglo-Saxon countries of adding "Roman" to "Catholic" is a healthy and logical one. It is certain that Italy does not represent Rome in the sense that we Christians give to that conception, but it is also certain that it approaches nearest to doing so.

Out of this comes the universal appeal of Italian films. Whether consciously or not, they carry a more or less perceptible stamp of Catholicism, which must delight men of good will, as a gleam of truth. On this subject we cannot believe that it was by chance that the first film which showed Italy's immortality to the world was OPEN CITY, a film of surpassing beauty whose chief character is a Catholic priest. The touching brotherhood of the Christian and the Communist, united in the same patriotic desire, was understood by Catholic critics and thought subversive by those whose religion is only a veneer. We Latins responded with an almost universal eulogy.

VIVERE IN PACE was considered by O.C.I.C. as the most constructive film of 1947. PAISA and the popular OPEN CITY were recognised by the critics in the United States as the best foreign films of the year in which they appeared. The festivals and special exhibitions of Venice, Brussels, Cannes and other cities hailed the Italian cinema as a worthy heir to a tradition which was interrupted only by the period of universal confusion from which God allowed no country to escape.

In view of the spiritual kinship of the Italian and the Catholic, one may deduce that these facts are happy omens and that all is not lost, because as long as there are people who react favourably to films like those already named or like FOUR STEPS IN THE CLOUDS there will be men well prepared to spread the Good Cause.

Jaime Potenze



CHILDREN'S FILMS

Above: ZANZABELLE A PARIS, winner of the Venice award in the category for children of 7 to 11 years. Made by Ladislav Staréwitch from a story by Sonika Bo (right, with youthful members of her Cendrillon Club). — Beneath: TRAPPED BY TERROR and THE LION, two British films shown at the Venice festival.



Locura de Amor
(Madness of Love)

a historical film by
Juan de Orduña.

SPANISH PRODUCTION



La Mies es mucha
(The Harvest is Plentiful)

a missionary film
made by José Luis Sáez
de Heredia.

BELGIUM

The Difficult Existence of the Italian Cinema in Belgium

The Office Catholique International du Cinema can claim credit for having helped to a great extent to make the Italian cinema known in Belgium. Indeed it was the film *VIVERE IN PACE* (To Live in Peace) having gained the O. C. I. C. prize at the Brussels festival in 1947 which drew the attention of the Belgian public to the exceptional merit of the Italian cinema. The O. C. I. C. prize was a decisive factor in the success which this film enjoyed wherever it was shown.

Soon other first-class Italian productions appeared on the market, notably *IL BANDITO* (The Bandit) and *CACCIA TRAGICA* (Pursuit). These films received a more than sympathetic welcome on the part of the critics and the intellectual section of the public. But the wider public which had welcomed *VIVERE IN PACE* received the other productions rather coldly. The Italian cinema still has only a limited public. *ROMA, CITTA APERTA* (Open City) and *PAISA* never succeeded in breaking away from the "specialist" cinemas in spite of the enormous reputation which had preceded them.

However the Italian cinema was launched and, as one might expect, other films which were far from attaining the standard of the great models, tried to find an opening in Belgian cinemas, especially in the less important ones. *DAVANTI A LUI TREMAVA TUTTA ROMA, UN UOMO RITORNA*, even films made during the war competed for the attention of the public which was only very sparingly given. The result was soon apparent. The wider public continued to look coldly upon Italian films and that section which had shown an interest in productions of real merit did not find in these commonplace films the high standard which it felt it had a right to expect.

Be that as it may, *L'ONOREVOLE ANGELINA* (Angelina) was a complete failure in the same cinema which had shown *ROMA CITTA APERTA*, *PAISA* and *VIVERE IN PACE*. There were, besides, serious errors with regard to publicity. Certain films such as *PRELUDIO D'AMORE*, by Paolucci, Visconti's *OSSESSIONE* and Rossellini's *DESIDERIO* — films of real value but bold in theme and treatment, had the doubtful glory of passing through the "specialist" cinemas accompanied by publicity which suggested they were almost pornographic.

The Italian cinema had not really deserved this!

Gradually, however, Italian films succeeded in breaking free from the specialist cinemas (in both senses of the word). *COME PERSI LA GUERRA*, which introduced Macario to Belgium, and *SENZA PIETA* were first shown in Brussels in cinemas in the centre of the city — not in the most exclusive, but still some progress had been made. Now the Italian cinema is completing its conquest of the public. *MOLTI SOGNI PER LE STRADE* and *LADRI DI BICICLETTA*, the two prize films at the Knocke Festival are being shown simultaneously to the people of Brussels, the second in one of the most exclusive cinemas.

It would be unjust not to draw attention to the efforts, both generous and disinterested, of a few managers and distributors to spread knowledge of the Italian cinema. Such an occurrence is too rare to pass unnoticed. We should also mention the work of the *Ecran du Seminaire des Arts*. This organisation began its season with the film *SOTTO IL SOLE DI ROMA* — not yet shown in Belgium, and plans, for a smaller

public, a series dealing with the evolution of the Italian cinema.

At this moment the film *JOAN OF ARC* has just been released simultaneously in all the big towns. As was to be expected the press, with rare unanimity, has shown considerable reticence. While recognising the film's good points it is regretted that it has not succeeded in entering fully into the soul of Joan of Arc. Victor Fleming's film comes nowhere near making one forget Dreyer's. As might be expected, the public takes no notice of the more than reserved attitude of the press and besieges with queues the cinemas where the film is showing.

Leo Lunders, O. P.

BELGIAN CONGO

THE CINEMA IN THE MISSIONS OF THE BELGIAN CONGO

We publish an extract from a long letter by the Reverend Father Alb. van Haelst of the Tshidimba-Tshimbulu Mission. We feel sure it will interest our readers.

Almost all the films imported into the Belgian Congo are either incomprehensible to the natives, badly interpreted or quite frankly bad. My chief object is to create films adapted to the native mentality. For fifteen years I have been concerned with the cinema. Since 1935 I have been shooting scenes as an amateur and since last year I have been instructed by my superiors to devote my whole attention to the problem.

I practise filming, therefore, everything which could interest the natives: Missions, events and feasts, such as a First Mass for instance, Mission medical services, important Chieftains, manners and customs, etc.

I myself organise cinema sessions, carrying the apparatus by lorry. The natives come in their thousands to see a film; they arrive from places fifteen kilometres away if they hear that the "Cinema Father" is in the neighbourhood.

Our films are enormously successful. They are unobtainable elsewhere and that is why we have to make them ourselves. Great films like *THE SONG OF BERNADETTE* or *MONSIEUR VINCENT* would have no appeal to the natives and might even be harmful. You have to live among them to know them. However if we are to present good cinema shows we must also have some European films. The people are very eager to see things from abroad and almost at every session they ask for shots of Belgium or Europe (Mputu). And so I am looking for simple documentary films. Films with religious subjects — processions, feast days; sports films — about running, bicycle racing, football, etc. Films showing the activities of country people, the management of a small farm.

On the other hand in the Vicariate of Luluabourg we have about four hundred missionaries, Fathers, Brothers and Sisters. From time to time we have great reunions, at times of yearly retreats for instance. Everyone has expressed the desire to see a good film from time to time during these meetings. Would it not be possible to acquire by some means or other one or two great films which no longer have any commercial value here, such as, for example, *THE SONG OF BERNADETTE*, which was shown in all the centres of the Belgian Congo? Such a film at our disposal would be a pleasant surprise for so many missionaries in the bush. I have numerous films about native life, dances, ways and customs, great Chiefs, which I am

sure would be appreciated by European audiences. Would it not be interesting for some film society to make an exchange? In conclusion I must add that I am not the only one concerned with the cinema in the Congo. Three or four missionaries are interested in it too, but less exclusively. The founder of our work (the "Centre Congolais d'Action Cinématographique Catholique") is the Reverend Father van den Heuvel (Scheut) of Leopoldville.

CANADA

The Spread of Film Study in Canada

Prior to the Second Great War, during which she assumed a role of international importance, Canada was no more in the eyes of the man in the street than the "thirty acres of snow" mentioned in Voltaire's jest. In spite of her economic, social and military achievements, prodigious when compared with the resources of her neighbour, the United States, her progress in the cinema world has been relatively small. She cannot bear comparison with even such small countries as Mexico, Sweden and Denmark, which last provided the sole source of supply for the German cinemas during the first decade of the century.

When one considers that the Canadians spread over a hundred million dollars a year on seeing foreign films, mainly American and French, in their three thousand obscure cinemas scattered throughout the country, I do not know what phenomenon could explain the absence of a national industry. One must conclude from this that in Canada the cinema is not recognised as a reality. On the contrary, film study is expanding more and more in intellectual circles which aim, by means of their film societies, at studying the cinema as the creator of a new aesthetic medium, "as an agent capable by its action on the intellectual and emotional faculties, of modifying the very outlook of man."

When I spoke above about the absence of a national cinema, I was not forgetting the excellent work done by the *National Film Office* in the documentary field. "This office is rendering a service to the Canadian people by means of the visual interpretation on Canadian screens of phases in the life and culture of the country, its social problems, its national resources and industries and its achievements in the arts, the sciences, research and medicine. It serves Canada abroad by presenting her to other countries and it keeps Canadians informed on aspects of international affairs which are of general public interest". (*Annuaire du Canada* 1946). Since its creation in 1939 *l'Office National du Film* has produced and distributed about 400 short films a year. These films are produced in both French and English for, as is well known, Canada is a bilingual country. 35 mm. films in the series *EN AVANT, CANADA* (Forward Canada) and *LE MONDE A L'OEUVRE* (The World at Work) are shown in the bigger cinemas while the 16 mm. productions are shown by mobile units to audiences in rural areas numbering over 400,000 people a month. The residents of every town can also obtain the films they require from their local film libraries: most Canadian centres of population numbering upwards of 5,000 inhabitants have their own libraries. Besides those in French and English, *l'Office National du Film* distributes films from practically every country in the world in their native languages.

The methods of this Canadian Government organisation are well worth studying both on account of

the immense material rewards which accrue to its technicians, the vast scope available to them, and the liberty which they enjoy, all of which help to form, along with England and perhaps the U.R.S.S., one of the only real schools of documentary in the world.

The undertakings of *l'Office National du Film* tend, moreover, to include every variety. I must draw particular attention to the productions of Palardeau, de Ladouceur, McLaren... The latter is in charge of the animated cartoon section; several of his films in the Chants Populaires series illustrating the folk tunes of French Canada, have received special mention in international film festivals, particularly at the Animated Cartoon Festival held in Paris last year.

In Canada, the so-called commercial cinema is insignificant. During the last four or five years two film companies, *Renaissance Films* and *Quebec Production*, have been formed in the province of Quebec by, it is interesting to note, French Canadians.

The films which they have produced up to now: *LE PERE CHOPIN*, *LA FORTERESSE* and *UN HOMME ET SON PÊCHE* are scarcely worth mentioning. *LE GROS BILL* which is in process of completion and *LE CURE DE VILLAGE* with scenario by a well known poet and radio author, Robert Choquette, which is on the point of being put into production, both show signs of a better general treatment and a more consistent character.

The cinema "this extraordinary art which, overflowing the boundaries of its own aesthetic medium, appropriates the beauty of other modes of expression to offer us its discovery on the screen" finds in Canada a little group of enthusiastic experts who have not yet been given the chance to express themselves.

Jacques Giraldeau

DENMARK

Less Home Product.

The Danish Film Industry has worked slowly since May 1949. Only one Danish film has been released.

Production was commenced in January of this year on the ambitious film *FOR FREEDOM AND RIGHT*. Produced by Dansk Kulturfilm and directed by Svend Methling, it deals with the inauguration of the Danish Parliamentary Constitution in 1849. Costing more than 3 million Danish Kroner, it is the most expensive Danish film yet undertaken. The cast includes practically all the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, among them Mogens Wieth and Ebbe Rode, as well as a number of well-known film players. Playing the role of Frederik II., the king who issued the Constitution, is Ib Schonberg. The film, which has considerable moral and social value, is a defence of and a welcome to the parliamentary system as a custodian of human ideals and rights. The dialogue is written by the Danish author Leck Fischer and is, so to say, the continuation of *THE KING ORDERED*, made in 1938, which dealt with the freedom achieved by the down-trodden peasants in 1788. Both films are of interest to students of Danish cultural history for they reconstruct, for the first time in film, outstanding occasions in our history. Some of the scenes, as for instance the great meeting in the Casino, March 1849, when civil war seemed imminent, are of particular interest. Most of the dialogue is taken from contemporary reports, and the historic figure, Orla Lehmann, is featured together with a fictitious figure, a

W O R L D P A N O R A M A O F F I L M

schoolteacher, through whose eyes we follow the political and cultural developments of the story.

It is expected that during the autumn 1949, there will be a reduction of entertainment tax from 60% (the highest in the world) to 35%. Should this happen, it will automatically give the national film production a fair chance to compete with the richer and more lavish foreign films.

Though the cinema crisis has its repercussions in Denmark also and reduces the number of foreign films shown, the following have had a great public success: *WELCOME STRANGER*, *THE STREET WITH NO NAME*, *KNOCK ON ANY DOOR* and *MANON*. During the summer many of the first-run theatres are closed and the repertoire consequently slows down. Denmark took part in most of the film festivals this year. At Bath (England) the Children's Film festival had *THE TINDERBOX*, which was very well received; at Knokke-le-Zoute, a medical film dealing with throat operations, made in collaboration with Dr. Herbert Trier-Morch, our best-known throat specialist, won a prize. For Cannes, Venice and Marianske-Lazne short and feature-length films have been sent.

Owing to the difficult economic situation from the point of view of films, there has been little room in Denmark for non-commercial productions. Now, however, *Dansk Kultur-film* is giving much consideration to films of a more cultural type. It is worth mentioning that Luciano Emmer is to direct a short colour film treating of the mural paintings to be found in most of the country churches. These paintings date from the Catholic period and we hope that this indicates a better and freer time in films from the Catholic point of view. We look forward to a production that deals with Catholic subjects or to which, as Catholics, we can give our complete approval. Danish people are now, more than ever, film-minded.

Björn Rasmussen.

EGYPT

The Egyptian Cinema In The Last Six Months

Before attempting any report on film activity in Egypt it is necessary to give a brief ethnographic survey of the country so as not to give a false impression.

It is a long narrow country, stretching for 2,000 kilometres from the Mediterranean; three quarters of its population of 20,000,000 do not live in towns and it has 400,000 foreign residents, of mainly French culture. Only 5% of Egyptians are literate. The villages have no electricity. The foreign population lives mainly in Alexandria, Cairo and the Canal Zone.

These three centres contain more than half of the 250 cinemas, which show for the most part foreign films; 300 in 1949, of which 200 were American, 50 Italian, 40 English and remaining 10 French, Greek and others.

Production from *Cairo studios*, having reached its maximum with 90 films in 1947, has fallen this year to 50.

As the cinema is the sole recreation of most city-dwellers, cinemas are full every day and considering their limited clientele attract large audiences. Among films imported this year, which were seen by audiences composed of 90% foreigners, and 16% Egyptians, the four greatest successes, which are only beginning their runs, have already the following receipts (in Egyptian pounds):

HAMLET £E 10,149; *LOVES OF CARMEN* £E 9,705; *FIGHTING O'FLYNN* £E 7,807; *OLIVER TWIST* £E 6,744.

HAMLET, already known as a classic by most of the audiences, was very well received. *LOVES OF CARMEN* owed its success to Rita Hayworth, whose name had been established by *GILDA*. *FIGHTING O'FLYNN*, a powerful subject, with plenty of action, was of a type very popular with young people and the Egyptian public generally. *OLIVER TWIST* was enjoyed because of its acting and its theme.

Mention must be made of *RED SHOES*, which appeared in Cairo at the beginning of the summer and in less than two weeks has taken £E 4,779, thus bidding fair to outdo *HAMLET*.

It is interesting to notice the success of English films. In spite of the great efforts made by all classes of society, Egypt is still only a beginner in many fields. The rich and educated, and the emancipated working class badly lack opportunities for recreational activities and cultural centres and they feel the need acutely. They neglect no opportunity of filling this need.

Let us take the case of *RED SHOES*. There is no ballet in Egypt, except the occasional company which comes to spend the winter there and then the prices of admission are absurdly high. *RED SHOES* offered a unique opportunity of enjoying ballet, at a tenth of the usual cost, even in the summer.

To the Egyptian public the cinema is not limited to an escape, a relaxation, but is a source of life, an answer to unsatisfied needs. The audience looks to it for mental nourishment as well as amusement. Good classical or didactic films or those of historical reconstruction, will always be assured of success. The figures are available and speak for themselves.

We here are part of the East, and the centre of Oriental life is the family. The oriental lives a healthy natural family life and all his activities are coloured by it. The same taste for natural things leads him to admire and enjoy Italian films. In only one year the number of such films imported has increased to 50. At present two agencies are fully employed in this field.

On the other hand, French productions do not seem able to make themselves popular, perhaps for opposite reasons. A minor film import agency, a cinema at Alexandria and one in Cairo, which intended to deal with them have had to give up the idea. The public has rejected French films. Distaste for them has reached the point where a French film cannot achieve a seventh of the takings of other productions.

THE FUGITIVE and *THE SEARCH*, O.C.I.C. prize films, were more or less successful, the second being more to the public taste than the former.

Egyptian production will shortly be discussed in this review by a leading Egyptian critic.

In this country, the cinema is suffering a crisis comparable with that in other industries. Great efforts are being made by the three great Cairene production organisations, *Nahas Films*, *Misr Films* and *Al Ahram*, and by the largest distributors *Behna Frères*. They are looking for the best scenarii, for films of international standard with dubbed copies, as well as for new markets in India and China.

The Government, far from assisting the cinema industry, hinders it in a variety of petty ways. Technicians and other professionals however, have great hopes for the future. They deserve the help of all who are interested in the seventh art, who cannot fail to admire their courage and their capabilities.

P. Franzidis

FRANCE

Nothing outstanding — yet some good Films.

France has produced in the past year, ninety full length films. Before the war, a double programme was usual, utilising twice as many films as sessions; France then making from 110 to 120 films annually. So, as regards quantity, French production is not doing badly.

In this article, let us confine ourselves to recording only such good quality films as, for one reason or another, deserve attention. The period from October 1948 to October 1949 has offered some thirty such films, in other words one third of the total. We often complain of the bad quality of much cinematographic output, yet if, in the field of literature or drama we rejected all but the really worth-while productions, should we be able to retain, as here, a proportion of one third?

Among French films this past year none has revolutionised the Cinema. We have already noticed the rarity, during the period, of works of greatness — nothing by René Clair, Marcel Carné, Renoir, Bresson, Becker or Anton Lara. The films which have attracted most critical attention, PARENTS TERRIBLES by Cocteau, and MANON by Clouzot, from a moral standpoint are unsatisfactory. Among the films which from a Christian point of view are worthy, the works of Maurice Cloche, as usual, head the list. After DOCTEUR LAENNEC, LA CAGE AUX FILLES, of which we shall speak presently, is one of the most beautiful attempts to treat earnestly and deeply a great human problem.

This year France has not reaped an abundant harvest of prizes at international festivals. However, LA FERME DES SEPT PÉCHÉS carried off the laurels at Locarno. Its maker, the relatively little known Jean Devaivre, has managed fully to exploit a rather dry as dust story. Paul Louis Courtier, the hero, a celebrated pamphleteer of the early 19th Century, is merely a name for the cultured Frenchman of today, almost unknown to his contemporaries. On a well reconstructed background of 19th Century rural France, the film presents its chief character by means of a process comparable to that in CITIZEN KANE: we see P. L. Courtier through the eyes, successively, of all his familiars. In spite of this diversity of aspects, the central figure remains antipathetic, as do all the actors in the drama. A skilful film and well played, which interests the head but not the heart.

"Costume" films, staged in a more or less distant epoch were numerous in the summer. With DU GUESCLIN the French cinema achieved historical reconstruction at its most spectacular. Du Guesclin, national hero of the middle ages, remains famous for his swashbuckling courage, and his personal ugliness. The first rate actor Fernand Gravey has obligingly disfigured himself in order to play the part. One finds his impersonation credible, in spite of the armour and other mediaeval accessories which can so easily reduce this type of film to a masquerade. The partisan warfare which he leads in his native forests is not very different from that which we ourselves experienced a few years ago, and, as a whole, the authors of the film have succeeded in projecting a distant past into a realistic present.

With BARRY we are transported to the start of the 19th Century, the Empire period. The action takes place in the

neighbourhood of the Great St. Bernard whose monastery is famed for the specially trained dogs used by the monks to discover and succour travellers lost in the snows on the road to Italy. The great actor Pierre Fresnay here creates a remarkable part and the film is moving although the plot, a shade too smoothly conceived, often approaches the melodramatic. Without being a "religious" film, BARRY gives importance to the vocation of the character played by Fresnay, and remains from start to finish inspired by the highest sentiments.

LE SORCIER DU CIEL belongs nearly to the same period. Aiming still higher, it tackles yet again the problem of throwing a Saint's life on to the screen. It may appear strange that from amongst all the French saints the authors have chosen the Curé of Ars, whose uneventful life was lived in its entirety in one village, a life-time devoted and divided between the Presbytery and the Confessional. A life of the Spirit, a mystical drama, especially difficult to express in a film. Georges Rollin, a young actor of note, devotes all his talent and brings all his faith to the task of interpreting the Saint's character. The film is frequently touching, but does not enable us to realise the sanctity of the Curé and does not always give plausibility to the attitude of those who surround him. A film compacted of good intentions, LE SORCIER DU CIEL is not a failure, but stresses once again the difficulties besetting biographical and religious films.

RETOUR A LA VIE deals with the multiple drama of the repatriating of prisoners after five years absence. They return to find a homeland radically altered where life has gone on without them. Five different stories, handled by talented craftsmen, and played by five great actors present individual cases treated in sentimental, dramatic and ironical mood. A compelling film. The problems it exposes are still too poignant to allow of the film's securing universal admiration. From the cinematographic standpoint one cannot but applaud this collective wealth of talent which gives a dramatic and human value to the thorny problems confronting the re-adaptation to normal life of those separated from their people during the whole length of the war.

Following MONSIEUR VINCENT and LAENNEC, Maurice Cloche deals with a contemporary question while adhering to his chosen line. LA CAGE AUX FILLES, is concerned with prisons and reformatories for young delinquents. The subject is not new, and the setting — women's prisons — has often tempted the cinema for reasons not purely humane. Before the war, PRISON SANS BARREAUX was a typical success. Simultaneously with Maurice Cloche, the producer, Julien Duvivier handled the same question in AU ROYAUME DES CIEUX. It is impossible not to compare the two films. Maurice Cloche's evident refusal of "commercial" scenarios, overloaded and therefore artificial, in order to treat his subject from the highest and most earnest point of view, gives him the advantage. Not that the Duvivier film is clumsy, on the contrary. Of masterly technique, very movingly played by a young actress and Serge Reggiani it is yet unsatisfactory owing to the scenarios being too exclusively bent on piling up dramatic effects and exploiting the lowest instincts, of the spectators. At the opening of the film the Governor dies. She is succeeded by an hysterical type of woman who institutes a reign of terror with its attendant cruelties. Into this environment comes a pure and gentle girl animated with a love so passionate that nothing of this atmosphere of evil can injure or sully her. To make matters worse, the whole region is

flooded and all the prisoners are in danger of perishing. Such an accumulation of dramatic complexities serves to make the film and the characters wholly unconvincing. The detail confuses refinements and crudities; scenes of unlovely hysteria, inevitably exploited by the publicity in juxtaposition with a sympathetically drawn priest and a communal prayer in the dormitory which might have been moving.

Where Maurice Cloche scores in *LA CAGE AUX FILLES* is in *not* exploiting the "picturesqueness" of prisons for his own purpose and in *not* depending on an artificially dramatic plot. He has instead, done his utmost to diagnose and lay bare to our understanding this example, this "case" of a girl and her antecedents and the conditions which have led her first to a reformatory and then to a prison. The author has been splendidly aided by his principal character, the youthful actress Danielle Delorme who gives proof all through of a remarkable talent, always sincere, realistic and vigorous.

The christian inspiration of the film is at once profound and discreet. No moralising, and a respect for the psychological truth of the characters which gives poignancy and naturalness to those movements when they turn instinctively towards God. At the same time, Maurice Cloche does not hesitate to touch the gravest problems relating to the communal life of these erring beings, which he does with delicacy but without false modesty.

In connection with this triumph of Danielle Delorme we cannot omit to mention that other film wherein she made her debut. *GIGI* developed from a story by Colette. This film of the early nineteen hundreds deals with the unsavoury theme of the "education" of a girl by her Grandmother and her Aunt, superannuated prostitutes who try to prepare Gigi to succeed them in their highly specialised profession. The style of Colette, one of our greatest writers, is always evident in the film, and saves it from the vulgarity which such a situation might have entailed. Drawn from a work written by a woman and rendered on the screen by a woman, the film somehow remains delicate in its most unpleasant moments, and is fundamentally the story of the triumph of purity over vice, since Gigi refuses to profit by the teachings of her mentors, and happily marries the man she was supposed to acquire as her "protector". Here again Danielle Delorme is admirable in her spontaneity and animation. She is certainly the "find" of the year and the future should hold for her a great career.

The market for shorter films is so strangely organised that it is usually only by chance that one sees the best works of this class. This year has turned out a number of successes, and has illustrated the possibilities of films in exhibiting works of art. A young film-maker, Alain Resnais, has constructed around *VAN GOGH* a remarkable work, using nothing but the master's pictures, and by means of a commentary telling his life story and showing the evolution of his talent.

L'EVANGILE DE PIERRE by André Bureau, makes use of similar methods to relate the life of Christ, by using the mediaeval sculptures to be found in our Cathedrals. *LES GISANTS* and *IMAGES MÉDIEVALES* also delve into the treasures of sculpture and painting of the Middle Ages so difficult of direct success, and which the Cinema can bring into close and living contact with all.

J. L. Tallenay.

GERMANY

The Apple has fallen

The film festivals of Venice and Cannes, made known for the first time to a non-German public, the film *DER APFEL IST AB* which has caused much ink to flow, from the first moment of its preparation and production in 1948. The discussion caused by the film sometimes took on a character of which serenity was not the dominant note.

Here we will try to consider the matter objectively.

For a better understanding of the whole matter, here first is a brief resume of the film.

A merchant named Adam Smith, married to one Lily, has a liaison with his secretary Eve. Adam attempts to solve this situation by suicide. He escapes death and ends up in an institution devoted to psychotherapy. On the eve of his departure from this place he has a dream. In his dream is recounted, somewhat after the manner of a music hall turn, the history of the first man. Created by God, he is placed in a "terrestrial Paradise", until the earth which Adam had broken in play, is repaired. God gave him as his companion Eve, a somewhat boring individual. Lucifer tries to tempt Adam by showing him all the delights of Hell, but Adam remains firm. He does not, however, resist the charms of Lilith, Lucifer's envoy. Adam and Lilith who, by this time has become his wife, are driven from Paradise to live on the earth. Eve follows Adam into exile. He thus finds himself in an impossible situation. God and the Devil have a conference, as a result of which it is decided to fuse Eve and Lilith into one single person, with whom Adam will then be happy. At this point Adam Smith wakes up and shortly, at a bus stop, he meets the ideal woman of his dreams. He departs with her, abandoning both his wife Lily, and his secretary Eve.

For the moment we will ignore the ending of the film, which is the negation of the idea of Christian marriage. The author in fact is not really concerned with that. He simply wishes to imply that the man should choose for himself a woman who resembles as closely as possible an ideal of "femininity", comprising a mixture of faults and good qualities. That one of the two women who embody, the one the faults, the other the good qualities, happens to be the man's wife, is ignored.

The criticisms to be made of this film are serious. First of all there is the treating of the history of the first man in the manner of a show put on as a nightclub attraction. It is not a question of being opposed to the anthropomorphic presentation of Christian doctrine. On the contrary such presentation of doctrine finds expression in the most ancient traditions. The Old and New Testaments are full of anthropomorphic expressions. But it is only acceptable if it makes more vivid the underlying religious reality. It should draw us nearer to God not drive us further away. We tend to make concrete, in recognisable imagery, all religious ideas, even the most abstract. The mystery plays of the middle ages are a very eloquent example of this. Nearer to our time, we have such examples as *GREEN PASTURES* and *HIMLASPEISET*. We find even the Angelology of *ITS A WONDERFUL LIFE* and *HERE COMES MR. JORDAN* acceptable, because these films do not treat Christian doctrine as a suitable subject for facile pleasantries.

DER APFEL IST AB, on the other hand, deals with the very roots of religion. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth..." Thus begins the Book of books", writes Daniel Rops. And there is no

other theme born of man which has been so fruitful to the spirit of man, as the first dozen chapters of Genesis. Christian morality is there born, the vision also which millions have accepted and made their destiny, the psychological explanation of the unhappiness within us, the hope which sustains us, all perhaps, that we consider most valuable, has come forth from these pages."

It is all this that we do not want to see reduced to the level of a music hall turn, adorned with barrack room jokes and facile allusions to present day political situations. Moreover, the impression is clearly given that Helmut Käutner desired to give a philosophical background to his film, and here we come to a very serious matter indeed, for here, all the ideas of Christian philosophy are falsified at the root. God is here shown to be in bad faith, as far as the creation of man is concerned, for He places man in such an environment that fidelity to the good is a psychological impossibility. The appearance of evil, the temptation and the Fall, are portrayed as all but a deliverance, from the straightjacket of virtue in which the first man was confined. One would not have thought that a Director of the cinema in the twentieth century would have revived the old quarrel of the Manichees. Au fond, that is what this film does. Evil is presented as an independent principle, so strong that in the face of its seduction the good is powerless. Humanity is the fruit of a compromise between good and evil both equally unable to conquer in a struggle that is without issue.

It is possible, even probable, that the public at large will not discern all this, and that it will simply regard the film as a somewhat vulgar spectacle. But the public will be unconsciously affected by this complete reversal of values. All error in presentation of doctrine is serious; when such errors strike at the very base of all Christian doctrine, we have no longer the right to be tolerant of it.

Leo Lunders

GREAT BRITAIN

I am writing these notes of the British films of the last quarter during the Biennale in Venice.

It is a chastening thing for a film critic to attend the major film festivals. The sub-standard productions of one's native land are seen again with acute embarrassment; one is on the defensive to try to point out to sceptical Latins the subtler implications of dialogue or historical allusion. Above all, one is aware of the strong differences which separate Welsh and Scottish and English. One is on the alert to explain that *THE LAST DAYS OF DOLWYN* is not an «English» film like *HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY*; that the only common link between them is the sing-song accent of the more or less Welsh. *WHISKY GALORE* and *PASSPORT TO PIMLICO* suddenly assume the significance of delegates to an international conference. Scotland and England become units expressing national idiosyncracies through the medium of film. To the audiences at Venice or Cannes, however, they are but puzzling pictures in a foreign language which is assumed to be English.

However, these festivals also encourage a sense of proportion.

It would be an interesting study to examine the defects which are common to films from Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, etc. It would be discovered, I think, that producers are not making films about their

own countries in their own manner but are imitating the style and technique of the more blatant Hollywood tradition. Not that all the sins of filmdom are to be laid at the doors of our American friends. It will be found that the worst offenders are foreigners who have come to the U.S.A. to make films. The films from America which have taken the world by storm and have aroused the enthusiasm of the critics are precisely those which tell an American story in the American way.

There is, I suppose, a place for international production, but the formula has not yet been discovered.

So, one sits in shame while the very articulate Venetian audience express their contempt for *BLUE LAGOON*, the naive story by H. Vere de Stacpoole. Why bother to do this sort of thing, which Hollywood does much more easily and just as badly? *Jean Simmons* does not come out of the experience with much credit. Her imitation of *Dorothy Lamour* is only equalled by Donald Houston's emulation of *John Hall* and *Johnny Weissmuller*. All that is left in the memory of this silly film are the excellent efforts by *James Hayter* and *Cyril Cusack* to bring to life the two most probable characters in the story. *Cyril Cusack* does well in another British film which, in spite of the well-deserved fame of its director and producer, adds nothing either to their reputation or the standard of British films. When it was announced that *Michael Powell* and *Emeric Pressburger* were to make a film about the Scarlet Pimpernel, one sighed over the lack of originality of subject but one expected at least an original treatment of this threadbare story. Alas for our hopes! Even the title of the film is misleading. *THE ELUSIVE PIMPERNEL* is the third of the Baroness Orczy's novels about Sir Percy Blakeney, but the film is a faithful rehash of the first. Let it be said at once that *Cusack's* Chauvelin has originality of approach and skill in presentation; that *David Niven* makes some attempt to fashion a different Sir Percy, more bucolic than foppish; that the settings are magnificent, the Court of St. James' and the corruption of the Regency period effectively evoked — it still remains that much time and skill have been used with the result only that one sighs for the loss of *Leslie Howard*.

The saga of *Neagle* and *Wilding* is taken a step further in *MAYTIME IN MAYFAIR* which is easy entertainment for those who like their films served up with ice-cream and raspberry syrup.

Comedies (rather cautiously labelled for fear of critical scorn) have been on the increase. *THE PERFECT WOMAN*, in which *Patricia Roc* with *Nigel Patrick* and *Stanley Holloway* give us a version of the Mechanical Doll story, is frankly filled with all the most obvious devices for stimulating laughter. In this it succeeds with the assistance of a little broad but harmless vulgarity. *STOP PRESS GIRL*, with *Sally Ann Howes*, *Basil Radford*, *Naunton Wayne* and *Gordon Jackson*, tells of a girl with the peculiar ability to stop all kinds of machinery fifteen minutes after she comes into the vicinity. This astonishing power is unconscious and brings disaster to trains, buses, factories, printing presses and airplanes, and is only cured when the girl falls in love! Such an idea has possibilities but they are certainly not realised in this feeble film. *MARRY ME!* also, is a film with an idea which does not come off. Two elderly ladies keep a marriage bureau and their efforts to try to reform their clients are not always happily devised. The cast includes *Carol Marsh*, *Zena Marshall* and *Patrick Holt* who are among the more promising of our young film players. *Patrick Holt* also stars in *A BOY, A*

GIRL AND A BIKE, a Gainsborough Picture which deals with the adventures of a cycling club. It is an uncomplicated, pleasant story which provides a welcome relief from the diet of sexual and sensual screen material on which we have been surfeited.

In the comedy line, undoubtedly the best of this or any other quarter for a long time have been the two Ealing Studio films, WHISKY GALORE and KIND HEARTS AND CORONETS. Coming so soon and so consistently after HUE AND CRY and PASSPORT TO PIMLICO, they are evidence that Ealing Studios, under the discriminating and skilful administration of Sir Michael Balcon, has struck a new vein in which careful scripting and the exploiting of the native scene are given their proper place as the primary considerations for convincing and successful native film production.

WHISKY GALORE is taken from one of a series of ironic novels by Compton Mackenzie dealing with the reactions of people during the war. It is set in the Isle of Barra, in the Hebrides, and tells of the efforts of the islanders to thwart the excisemen when a storm brings a shipload of whisky to their shore at a time when this precious (and to them essential) beverage was severely rationed. From the point of view of film, it is first-class. It tells its story as much by visual images as by dialogue. The acting of Basil Radford as an English Home Guard Captain among an islandful of Scottish individualists is magnificent. Joan Greenwood, after her pathetic attempt to bring reality to the fatuous BAD LORD BYRON, has an opportunity for subtle character work which she does not miss.

This film is so very evocative of the Scottish scene and character that one can safely quote it as an example of the line that our British film makers ought to be taking if they really wish to bring back the glorious days of our eminence in film art during the war.

KIND HEARTS AND CORONETS, which is as skilful and perfect in its way as WHISKY GALORE, tells of the ambition of a man whose mother has been disowned by her aristocratic family because she married an Italian singer, to attain to the ducal title. This involves the murder or removal of the eight persons whose claim to the title are prior to his. Obviously murder is not a funny business; nevertheless, the subject is dealt with in such an ironic, satirical manner that all sense of impropriety is nullified. The dialogue is mainly in the form of commentary by the usurper. It is delightfully witty and humorous but is so consistent and necessary to the plot that it is difficult to know how the film will be received by foreigners. Dennis Price gives the best performance of his career as the usurper. A tour de force is that of Alec Guinness, who plays no less than eight different roles: the members of the ducal family who have to be removed. He will be remembered as Fagin in OLIVER TWIST and the pale young gentleman in GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

Some films in more serious mood are MAN ON THE RUN, with Derek Farr and Joan Hopkins, an indifferent thriller; ADAM AND EVELYNE, in which Jean Simmons plays opposite Stewart Granger in a pleasing but undistinguished version of the «Daddy-Longlegs» story; SAINTS AND SINNERS, an Irish comedy-drama which does not escape falling into bad taste in one or two scenes where the parish priest is presented as a money-grasping dictator. The story centres round a village in which an old woman prophesies the end of the world in a few days time. The resulting repentance and remorse of many of the villagers, hitherto regarded as pillars of respectability pro-

vides the fun. It is directed by Leslie Arliss, whose IDOL OF PARIS still brings a blush to English cheeks. It stars Kieron Moore and Christine Norden; neither at their best. POET'S PUB, tries to translate Hemingway's caustic irony to the screen. The inn whose manager is a poet and whose guests are mainly socialists with an eye on the main chance is a good idea for a film, but like so many other British film ideas, does not succeed. The bright spot of this film is the sketch of a Bloomsbury Bluestocking played by Joyce Grenfell whose acutely observed character-sketches of English middle-class life are so popular on the B. B. C. THE HUGGETS ABROAD, gives the fourth dose of the sage which began with HOLIDAY CAMP.

Another Hemingway novel to reach the screen is PRIVATE ANGELO which Peter Ustinov wrote, directed and produced. It was made in Italy and is a kindly meant satire at the expense of the Italians in particular but in general of all soldiers who find themselves enlisted in a war they do not understand and wish to escape from. Peter Ustinov is disappointing. He plays his Angelo like a sulky British Public School boy — which is exactly what he was not. A cast which includes Godfrey Tearle, Marjorie Rhodes, Robertson Justice and Maria Denis, does well, but the laurels must go to the unnamed quartet who steal the film with their portrayal of a group of Customs Officers at London Airport. They are superb.

NOW BARRABAS brings our list of recent British films to a close. It is a sombre study of English prison life made by an author whose refusal to bomb an area in Britain which he knew to be infested with Canadian soldiers during the war earned him a prison sentence. His observations of conditions behind bars are made without bitterness but have, nevertheless, strong propagandist value for a more psychologically sympathetic attitude towards the brethren of Barrabas. A strong cast has outstanding performances from William Hartnell, Cedric Hardwicke, Kathleen Harrison and Beatrice Campbell.

The most sensational «flop» of the season is Sidney Box's CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, in which Frederic March and his wife head a cast which bravely tries to make the best of a thoroughly badly conceived film. The most adventurous story of the discovery of America is allowed to sink to the level of a sentimental novelette, with an ending in which ghosts talk of the Atlantic Charter, the Declaration of Independence, Democracy and Abraham Lincoln. It received a very bad press in London, and was mercifully withdrawn.

Foreign films have had an inconspicuous season. The Americans have sent us a series of brutal stories of which THE CHAMPION is, perhaps the least welcome. BRIDE OF VENGEANCE and CAPTAIN FROM CASTILE, make nonsense of Borgian and Inquisitorial history. JOAN OF ARC had a tremendous success at the London Pavillon. MONSIEUR VINCENT returns in September to London for his third long season; LOUISIANA STORY has at last come to London and has been welcomed with high praise from the critics. AUX YEUX DU SOUVENIR had a cold reception; ANGELINA captured the town; IRIS, the third Swedish film to be seen in London since the war had a moderate success.

So the round continues. The lover of the cinema goes to the Press Show in the constant hope of being surprised by a good piece of film work. He is most often disappointed, but now and again comes a film that rejoices him with the certainty that there are still film artists at work in the world.

John A. V. Burke.

NETHERLANDS

A Dutch Festival

The Netherlands too, have had their festival; the Dutch festival whose theatrical, musical and cinema presentations are divided between Amsterdam and the watering-place of Scheveningen.

This festival occupied only a modest place among the numerous festivals of international repute, and the part which the cinema played in it was modest too. But the worth of the films presented amply made up for their being so few.

During the first film programme those films which had not yet appeared in Holland were shown: a short made by Rudi Hornecker called *NAPOLEON CONTRA VENUS*; the documentary made by the Belgian Henri Storck *RUBENS* and some excerpts from *CASSE-PIEDS* by Jean Dréville. Storck's pioneer work excited admiration, while Hornecker's film was lacking in boldness and originality. It was about a simple love story between two young people whose vicissitudes are symbolised by the accidents which befall two statuettes in a second-hand shop. Within this limited framework the film achieves some charming effects, but without ever rising beyond certain very easy limits, so much so that one might take it for the work of an amateur rather than of an experienced film maker.

The second programme contained first of all the documentary *PARLEVINKERS* by Ytzen Brusse which received an award from the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Arts and Science; the film gives a rather too rosy picture of the hard but romantic job of the bumboat men who go around selling stores to ships at anchor in ports and rivers. Next came the fictionally treated Netherlands documentary *L.O. — L.K.P.* by Max de Haas in which he describes without fuss the work of the national organisation to help the partisans and guerilla fighters during the German occupation. Lastly, Vittorio de Sica's Italian film *LADRI DI BICICLETTA*, after gaining the grand prix at the Knokke Festival was acclaimed 'the best film of the month' by the Netherlands Film Club which only awards that distinction to works of a high cultural value.

Max de Haas's film does not present, as so many other films do, a spectacular resistance movement, dramatised and romanticised, but the resistance which awakes instinctively in the heart of the ordinary peaceful citizen who is concerned with his own and his home affairs, in whom love of liberty and justice finally is the dominant motive. The factory worker of Amsterdam and the peasant from Catholic Brabant, both of whom perish by German shot, are the examples. Max de Haas goes right to the source, to the very essence of Netherlands resistance; the churches which were the most active enemies of the Nazi paganism and the faith from which men of the resistance drew their almost superhuman strength. He is less at home sometimes in the comic scenes, some of which are not worthy of the producer of such a film as *DE BALLADE VAN DEN HOOGEN HOED*.

The situation of *Cinetone Studios* of Duivendrecht, to which our earlier reports referred, has become still more difficult, not to say impossible. The second Netherlands feature film *EEN KONINKRIJK VOOR EEN HUIS*, which was made in 1948, was, as had been foreseen, the last. The film *L.O. — L.K.P.* was synchronised very well in those studios, which are also used for the production of publicity films, the puppet films made by Joop Geesi and the *Cephima* society's films. But the income from these is insufficient to cover running costs. No Netherlands company has announced any forthcoming production, which is principally due to the risks occasioned by excessive entertainment taxes. Moreover it can hardly

be hoped that in the sufficiently near future foreign companies may hire the studios, even though it might be convenient to work in them, since in their own countries they have more than sufficient studio space for the present needs of production.

Reduction of the abnormally high figure of entertainment tax, or a government subsidy, are the only possible means of encouraging production of feature films in Holland. In many regions cinema entertainment tax is 35%, as against 20% for other public amusements, sports meetings etc.) and sometimes reaches 75% as in Gouda, a town of 40,000 inhabitants near Rotterdam; a quarrel has broken out between the civic authorities and the exhibitors who have closed their cinemas. As for production subsidies, the Netherlands are again in an unfavourable position compared with other countries whose Governments, almost without exception, support their national film industry financially. The question has been submitted to the Netherlands Government but so far the necessary action has not been taken.

However production of feature films has not stopped completely in the Netherlands. *Polygoon-Profil* of La Haye, a firm which specialises in newsreels, which incidentally are frequently very good, has begun a film provisionally entitled *DE DIJK IS DICHT* (The Dyke is Thick). The film draws its inspiration from the voluntary flooding, followed by the reclamation and reconstruction, of the island of Walcheren, as a symbol of the general recovery of the whole country. Plot and scenario are the work of A. Koolhaas who also wrote the scenario for the short semi-documentaries *MOEDER DES LANDS* and *THUIS*, and, confident in his earlier experience this time is producing as well.

As the pictorial scenes must tally with the documentary portion of the film, local types are being called upon as far as possible, with the exception of the principal parts which are going to professional actors.

Without prejudice of the resultant film, we see great promise in this attempt towards the production of feature films treating purely national subjects in realistic style. Following Hollywood where films like *THE SET UP* and *THE SNAKE PIT* opened the way for typically American subjects: following England which was next with *WHISKY GALORE* and *PASSPORT TO PIMLICO*; but most of all following Italy with such films as *PAISA*, *VIVERE IN PACE*, *CACCIA TRAGICA*, *SCIUSCIA* and *LADRI DI BICICLETTA*. It seems that Holland must understand that only a purely national production — and this is even truer for small countries — has a chance of arousing international interest.

We foresee for *L.O. — L.K.P.* as a fictional documentary with a typical Dutch plot, a sure chance of success abroad where it will carry an accurate and noble picture of Dutch resistance to the invader, as a substitute for the one which American producers romanticised to the point of the ridiculous in the sensational production *A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT*. The foreigner will be glad for us to show him how the resistance movement was born and grew in Holland. And Max de Haas's film has, in spite of its defects, sufficient qualities to hope for success outside our own country.

J. Fortuin

SPAIN

The Spanish Cinema

We include in this review new films exhibited in Spain from the 1st January 1949.

During this period 98 films have been shown of which 14 were Spanish, 50 American, 9 Mexican, 9 Italian, 7 Argentine, 4 French, 3 Swedish, 1 English and 1 Swiss.



REUNIONS

LONDON. J. Arthur Rank (left) and E. Monaco, President of the Italian Association of Cinema Industrialists (right) talk to two O. C. I. C. Vice-Presidents, Dr. Charles Reinert and the Reverend J. A. V. Burke.

PARIS. *Myrna Loy* with U. N. E. S. C. O. students during the IVth General Conference.



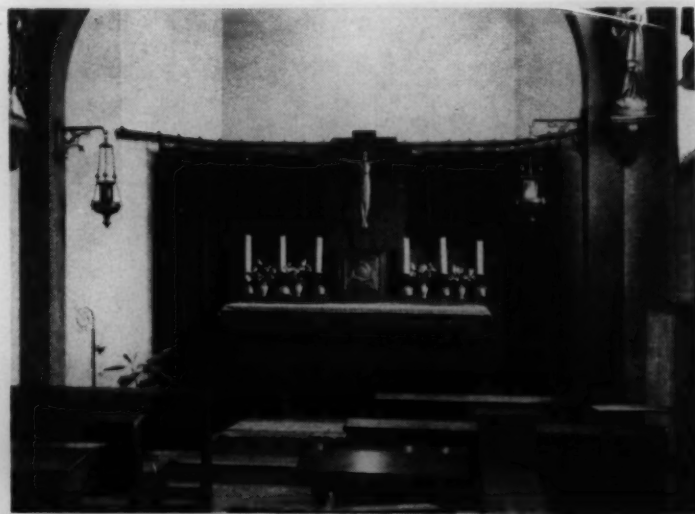
OCIC-News Items



1. O. C. I. C. Jury at the World Festival of Film and the Fine Arts at Knokke: P. Bertina (Holland), P. Regnoli (Vatican City), Rev. L. Lunders (Belgium), Dr. Charles Reinert, President (Switzerland), B. Rasmussen (Denmark), P. Grégoire (Luxemburg).



3. The Italian peasant child, Ines Orsini, overcome by the applause, bursts into tears at the end of *Cielo Sulla Palude*, in which she plays the part of Maria Goretti. Augusto Genina, the director, comforts her.



2. Members of the O. C. I. C. General Council visit Nettelfold Studios during the making of *The Girl Who Couldn't Quite*.



4. Rev. J. A. V. Burke (President) and P. Regnoli (member of the jury) announce the ward of the special O. C. I. C. prize to *Cielo Sulla Palude* at the Venice Biennale.



6. Part of an Exhibition of Culture through Film organised by the Centre Catholique d'Action Cinématographique in Belgium.

5. Brussels. O. C. I. C.'s private chapel, established by the devotion of the late lamented Canon Brohée, President.

Out of the Spanish productions *LOCURA DE AMOR* (Love Madness) had the greatest success. This was an historical film, an adaptation of the great Spanish writer Tomayo y Baus. It tells the story in romantic style of the jealousies of Joan of Castile, wife of Philip the Fair. An impressive subject which is unrolled with growing claim on one's interest and brings in the political situation of the period.

The action is magnificently staged and the producers built a huge set for the principal scenes, reproducing the wonderful central nave of the gothic cathedral at Burgos. The photography is splendid and the director was Juan de Orduna, one of the most outstanding in Spain.

This film shows Aurora Bautista, an actress of some talent, who with the popular Fernando Rey, Sara Montiel and Jorge Mistral, form the team of principal actors in this film.

Cifesa, one of the best established concerns, invested nearly eight million pesetas in the film, and for more than four months *LOCURA DE AMOR* was billed in one of the central cinemas in Madrid. With ever increasing success this production was declared to be of national interest, an exceptional distinction for Spanish films, and it is considered to be the best film shown at the Hispano-American festival last year.

This Spanish production had a triumphal following outside Spain. In Mexico for instance, its success was so overwhelming that it came to be christened "*Locura de Taquilla*" (Box Office Madness). The official Spanish State Censorship declared it to be suitable for showing to minors, and the Catholic Censorship found it to be suitable for both young people and adults.

At the same time as this film, *Spanish Film Enterprise* made and presented four other big films on a religious theme. One of them *CAPTAIN LOYOLA*, the scenario of which is by Don José Ma. Peman, a member of the Royal Academy of Spanish. In a series of biographical scenes the film covers the life of the founder of the Society of Jesus, Saint Ignatius Loyola. Rafael Duran, the great Spanish film actor brings the personality of the Saint vividly to life.

Among the artistic qualities of this film one's notice is particularly drawn to the excellent photography. José Diaz Morales, the director, was well advised, thanks to the Jesuit fathers. The film was a complete success.

Three other films have religious missions for their subject. Their titles are *AQUELLAS PALABRAS* (Those Words), which deals with the missions run by the Dominican fathers in the Philippines. *LA MANIGUA SIN DIOS* which shows the heroism of the Spanish missionaries in the American forests, and *MIES ES MUCHA* (The Harvest is Abundant) which deals with an international subject although the action is limited to a Spanish mission in the Indies.

The first two are technically only of average value, and their success has been transitory. On the contrary *MIES ES MUCHA* is a great film both technically and artistically, as well as on account of its edifying purpose. Its success with critics and public has been extraordinary. It tells simply the account of the daily life of a missionary with dramatic scenes alternating with humour. *Chapolo Films* produced it and its "mise en scene" has been very soberly done by José Luis de Heredia, one of the best known of Spanish film makers. The scenario was vetted by the Spanish Pontifical Society, and the film has earned the praises of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy. Several missionaries helped in the making of this film and it also has been declared to be of national interest.

Among the Spanish films on other subjects *CURITO DE LA CRUZ* should be mentioned, the scena-

rio of which deals with the romantic subject of the adventures of a famous bull fighter and also gives a wonderful documentary of a Spanish bull fight fiesta. It is a pleasant, moving and interesting film. In fact a film for a wide audience with notable cinematograph qualities. It reaches its climax at the moment of the exemplary christian death of one of its principal characters and was produced by *Cifesa*. It was filmed by the young director Luis Lucia who shows great promise, and the chief character is played by a bull fighter who actually enjoys a great measure of popularity in Spain whose name is Pepin Martin Vasquez. This film on account of its moral qualities is suitable for every kind of audience.

Foreign Films

Among the foreign productions the Italian film *FABIOLA* from the *Universalia di Roma* has been the most remarkable. Every review has been filled with unanimous praise, considering it to be an exceptional film of technical and artistic quality. Its success with the public has been outstanding. However, an excessively slow action, a first part badly photographed, a scenario somewhat confused and above all its lack of religious emotion comprise its main faults. The general opinion is that with the means at its disposal the producers have not known how to draw full profit from the quality of the subject.

Another Italian film *GIOVENTU PERDUTA* (Lost Youth) filmed by Pietro Germi has raised an interest worth mentioning, thanks to its excellent filming and to the bitter lesson to be learned from it.

American films have been shown in very large quantities, and this invasion by Hollywood has been due to its enormous production capacity and its perfect organisation in bringing them to all markets. However, although in Spain the stars of the American firmament are the most popular, the public is getting tired of the flatness of these films. The technical perfection is much admired but one searched in vain for the content. The themes are repeated "ad nauseam" and our public has been glutted to repletion with a series of films of a psycho-pathological type filled with absurd banalities.

The American films which have had the greatest success have been *FORT APACHE* produced by *Fox* and directed by John Ford and *COMRADE X*, the anti-communist satire of *Metro-Goldwyn Mayer* made by King Vidor. One cannot help noticing in this latter film that it is not sufficient to caricature communism, if one does not present arguments and facts which by their force and their dignity lift the argument out of the ridiculous. It is also of interest to mention that the Spanish public reacted violently against the film *ARC DE TRIOMPHE* with Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer which had to be taken off soon after the premiere. The Swiss film *THE SEARCH*, an *M.G.M.* and *Praesens Film* production filmed by Fred Zinnemann, has, however, had a great success.

French films shown during this period have been characterised by poverty of theme as well as technical and artistic mediocrity. The reviews as well as the public have not been favourable to them. Among them we should mention *KERMESSE ROUGE* and *LE LOUP DE MALVENEUR*.

We have only seen one English film during the season and that was *ODD MAN OUT* from "Two Cities" filmed by Carol Reed and starring James Mason. Its magnificent interpretation attracted some attention but the public did not like the subject of the film.

José Maria Cano

UNITED STATES

Pictures fight the anti-negro bias

Something akin to the social consciousness which was manifested in American motion pictures during the last half of the 1930's and resulted in such exceptional films as *OUR DAILY BREAD*, *THE LIFE OF EMILE ZOLA*, *THEY WON'T FORGET* and *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*, just to mention a few examples, appears to be taking hold again. As of the moment of writing three extraordinarily dramatic pictures concerning the delicate subject of anti-Negro bias in the United States have been released and at least two others of similar nature are in final stages of preparation. Moreover, the menace of communism also is being subjected to the scrutiny of Hollywood cameras, there being two pictures devoted to this hot subject just now with the promise of considerably more activity in this regard.

Just as the issue of anti-Semitism resulted in two uncommonly good pictures two seasons back — *CROSSFIRE* and *GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT* — the contemplation of the Negro in white society has brought forth potent pictures in *HOME OF THE BRAVE*, *LOST BOUNDARIES* and *PINKY*. (We list them in this fashion because that was the order in which they arrived on Broadway and, moreover, that is the most judicious way to sidestep any possible charge of partiality.) Significantly, this questionably commercial undertaking was sparked by two independent producers with small financial resources but, happily, the American moviegoing public demonstrated that it is not quite the Ostrich which some of the major producing companies regard it to be, judging by the lack of courage and initiative generally displayed by the selection of material for filming.

HOME OF THE BRAVE, made by a young producer named Stanley Kramer and distributed by *United Artists*, was first into release. It was based on the Arthur Laurents play, which originally dealt with anti-Semitism as experienced by a battle-scarred Jewish soldier on a lonely Pacific Island during the war. The validity of the drama did not suffer any by making the central character a Negro in the film. For the picture, with its bold, straight-from-the-shoulder dialogue and the incisive manner in which the story unfolds, strikingly mirrors the cruel, unchristian and, from a purely social viewpoint, potentially dangerous consequences of thoughtless and selfish humiliation of an individual simply because the Lord in his wisdom did not choose to people the earth exclusively with Caucasians. Generally well acted by a small and comparatively unknown cast, particularly by James Edwards as the Negro GI, and sharply directed by Mark Robson, *HOME OF THE BRAVE* appears to have impressed the public as strongly as it did the majority of professional movie observers.

Impressive as the film was, however, it does not measure up to the stature of *LOST BOUNDARIES*, which, in this reviewer's opinion, bids fair to find a place among that tight little circle of all-time movie bests. Produced by Louis de Rochemont, who created *THE MARCH OF TIME* and who more recently turned to feature production with *HOUSE ON NINETY-SECOND STREET* and *BOOMERANG* (these pictures set the American industry off on its present documentary-type spree), *LOST BOUNDARIES* also is a representation of independent creativeness. De Rochemont had contracted to make the story for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer release, but was unwilling to change his ideas for the picture in a manner to suit studio officials and ultimately made a releasing arrangement with a small company, *Film Classics Inc.*

LOST BOUNDARIES is a documented story, taken from the pages of the Reader's Digest, dealing

with a Negro doctor and his wife who had passed as white for twenty years and raised two children in ignorance of their racial heritage. Ironically the deception is forced on the doctor because his skin looks so white that he is refused an internship by a Negro hospital in the South. For a period of years Dr. Scott Carter and family are loved and admired by their neighbors in a small New Hampshire town, and the shock of discovering they are Negroes is a crushing experience for the children over and beyond the immediate humiliation they suffer when neighbors turn away from them. The major irony of the drama is that the secret never would have come out had not Dr. Carter endeavored to serve his country by accepting a commission from the Navy during the recent war. At that time the United States Navy did not commission Negroes and, as gossip will, it pretty soon got around town that the Navy's real reason for rejecting Dr. Carter was not due to "failure to meet physical requirements."

Supercharged with emotion, *LOST BOUNDARIES* also is one of the most thought-provoking pictures that has graced the American screen. Moreover, it is a stirring example of christianity in action, for it is through the inspiring sermon of a minister on the brotherhood of man that the community overcomes its prejudice and helps the Carters to begin life anew. Mel Ferrer gives a brilliant performance throughout this memorable film, which was photographed in its entirety in genuine New England and Harlem, New York, settings, and is acted to considerable degree by real townspeople. The clergyman is most affectingly played by the Rev. Robert A. Dunn, an Episcopal minister of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

In *PINKY*, *Twentieth Century-Fox* takes up the problem of a Negro nurse who is so light skinned that she is sorely tempted to deny her race and accept a proposal of marriage from a young white doctor whom she met and fell in love with up north. That is the sugar coating — the boxoffice lure — for a revealing and impressive exposition of the social injustice inflicted on the Negro in certain sections of the United States. The locale of the story is Birmingham, Alabama, an area of the Deep South where slavery flourished before the Civil War and where segregation has long been the blackman's burden. In this respect *PINKY* fills in an important aspect of the problem of Negro prejudice not dwelt upon to any extent in the other two pictures.

Having lived as a white for three years while studying nursing in Boston, and having grown accustomed to both the economic and social privileges such a deception enabled her to enjoy, Pinky is both humiliated and angered by the indignities she suffers in attempting to resume life as a Negro back home. The camera speaks more eloquently and forcefully than words in *PINKY*. For pointed though much of the dialogue is, it does not impress as clearly upon the mind the chasm which separates whiteman and blackman as do the sharply contrasting scenes of the two worlds in which these brothers in the sight of God live.

The suggestion of miscegenation inherent in *PINKY* is kept at a safe distance as the broader aspects of Negro-white relations are reflected in the experiences of the girl who gradually finds a satisfaction in helping her people to a better life which transcends personal feelings. The righteous indignation and anger that well up in Pinky's aged grandmother when the distraught girl blurts out her desire to live as a white is one of the noblest and most inspiring scenes ever played on the screen. With a dignity that is simple, yet awesomely God fearing, the grandmother feelingly conveys her shame and commands Pinky to get down on her knees and to beg forgiveness from the Good Lord for so much as daring to think of denying herself in His sight.

W O R L D P A N O R A M A O F F I L M

Although Jeanne Crain plays Pinky with a great deal of persuasion and sympathetic appeal, it is the talented Negro singer and actress, Ethel Waters, whose performance as the grandmother stands out most brilliantly as a genuine piece of artistry. Great is not too praiseworthy a descriptive to bestow upon Miss Waters' acting. With Elia Kazen as the director, every inch of the film is carefully paced, and the mood of the photography sharply counterpoints the drama. *PINKY* is a major dramatic work; more refined in technique than either *HOME OF THE BRAVE* or *LOST BOUNDARIES*, but in this spectator's opinion it does not have as broad scope or the rugged integrity which distinguished the de Rochemont work. However, it is a stimulating, powerful picture and may well be more successful commercially as it contains more of the elements of popular appeal than did its predecessors.

While neither *HOME OF THE BRAVE* nor *LOST BOUNDARIES* illuminate the whole complex and unhappy problem of race discrimination, they nevertheless are significant, not only as creative entertainments but as sharp beacons of enlightenment in an era of social conflicts and turmoil.

Unfortunately, the examination of Communist activities in the United States as reflected by Republic's thundering *THE RED MENACE* is by no means measured in thought or persuasively presented. Attempting to make an impression by pointing up the insidious machinations of the Communist Party in America, the film paints its menace in such heavy and unabashed melodramatic terms that one is apt to dismiss the local Kremlin operatives as a bunch of disoriented and ineffective dopes. In its single public showing in New York at the moment of writing *THE RED MENACE* failed so miserably at the boxoffice that it was withdrawn after a one week stand. The explanation does not lie in public apathy — quite the contrary, for there is an awareness here of the dangers of Communism that is even more reassuring than possession of an atomic bomb. *THE RED MENACE* is simply an inept tirade against an evil force which should be treated with the most considered judgement in order to effectively expose its true diabolical nature. It is to be fervently hoped that the coming RKO Radio picture, *I MARRIED A COMMUNIST*, will effectively serve the interests of democracy and Christianity.

On the lighter side, Hollywood has come up with several above average entertainments. *COME TO THE STABLE*, written by Clare Booth Luce and produced by Twentieth Century-Fox, tells a warm, ingratiating tale about how two penniless nuns from France built a hospital for children in a little town called Bethlehem in Connecticut. The two delightful sisters, played by Loretta Young and Celeste Holm, prove that faith not only can move mountains but also the cold hearts of mankind. Much of the quality of *GOING MY WAY* and *THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S* are reflected by the new picture as Miss Holm in the flowing habit of Sister Scolastica, a former champion tennis player, takes up a racket and plays a furious match in a desperate effort to raise much needed money for the building program. An altogether delightful entertainment despite an extra heavy coating of sugar in the general atmosphere of the production.

Very good news is the reunion of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in the song and dance funfest *THE BARKLEYS OF BROADWAY* which Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer wrapped in agreeable Technicolor. As a married stage couple they go through an extended jealous tantrum which threatens to spoil their marriage but everything works out as expected. Mr. Astaire and Miss Rogers, though having gone their separate

ways on the screen for the last ten years, have not forgotten how to keep in step for, like bacon and eggs, they just naturally go together.

The irrepressible Bob Hope has taken a Damon Runyon study of curiously cynical Broadway race-track types and made out of it a highly amusing and typical Bob Hope comedy in the Paramount film, *SORROWFUL JONES*. . . . A fascinating example of parental "waywardness" is sharply portrayed in *EDWARD, MY SON*, featuring Spencer Tracy and Deborah Kerr. This Metro drama, filmed in London, deals with the corruption of an English businessman who, out of mad desire to give his only child all the material benefits of life, turns into a monstrous person and makes life for his wife a literal hell on earth. . . . Gay and bright are the terms for *IT HAPPENS EVERY SPRING*, a Twentieth Century-Fox romp inspired by the national sport. This one is about a chemistry teacher who discovers a formula for a compound that makes a baseball repellent to wood and becomes a hotshot pitcher in the big league since no batter can hit his ball. A wild farcical idea, to be sure, but plenty of fun just the same. . . . Talking of baseball, another film dealing with the sport is Metro's *THE STRATTON STORY*, which spins a touching tale of courage on the part of a man and inspiring devotion by his wife in the face of a grave injury. James Stewart and June Allyson are co-starred in this real life story of Monty Stratton, who lost a leg in a hunting accident, but after a long and painful effort managed to stage a comeback in baseball. Heart and understanding are big factors in the fine quality of this inspiring and affecting film.

THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL has grown into a major serial undertaking and will finally comprise fourteen films, divided into thirty minute subjects each, according to Cathedral Films. This producing company, which is headed by the Rev. James K. Friedrich, an Episcopalian priest, is selling the Saint's biography to Loyola Films, a Catholic distributing agency, which alters the original commentary to conform to the Douay version of the Bible. The first three chapters in the series have been released and two others now are ready for distribution, namely *RETURN TO JERUSALEM* and *AMBASSADOR OF CHRIST*, while two more dealing with St. Paul's apostleship on the Island of Crete are ready to go before the cameras. Pictures produced by the company have as many as 25,000 individual church hookings, proving that there is a large audience for religious subjects. All the films are made for 16mm projection.

Greta Garbo apparently has grown tired of being alone, after eight years away from the screen, and has signed with producers Walter Wanger and Eugene Frenke to star *LA DUCHESSE DE LANGEAIS*. Based on a Balzac story, the film is to be made in France and Italy, starting in September. James Mason is due to be Miss Garbo's co-star.

While \$ 3,000,000 budgets for pictures may be a thing of the past in Hollywood, the cost of movie-making still is impressive. Announcing a twenty-five picture schedule for Twentieth Century-Fox, Darryl F. Zanuck said the average cost per picture would be about \$ 1,709,000, and, he added, that he didn't see how the figure could be pared down much more without affecting quality.

The Screen Writers Guild has proposed that studios pay authors a rental fee for stories to cover a specified number of years instead of the current practise whereby stories are purchased outright. So far the studios have not shown any especial enthusiasm for the suggestion since that would take a big slice out of profits in filming stories more than once.

In another bid to gain more recognition for its membership, the *Screen Writers Guild* has turned to making its own awards for outstanding craftsmanship. In a recent ceremony, awards went to *THE SNAKE PIT*, *EASTER PARADE*, *TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE* and *SITTING PRETTY* as the best drama, musical, Western and comedy, respectively, for 1948.

Thomas M. Pryor

URUGUAY

URUGUAY: A SURVEY

Although it is not possible to give figures since the local statistics offices take so long to issue their results, the general impression here is that cinema audiences have increased considerably this year in comparison with former years. It would seem that one important factor in this increase has been the alteration in times of showing which at present are conveniently arranged from noon to midnight. Although there are many cinemas in Montevideo it is still difficult to find a seat during the most popular times.

In other provinces the ever increasing importance of the industry may also be remarked, in view of the large number of new cinemas which have been opened. In the period from April 5th to July 1949 the following were opened; "Gran Rex" with 1200 seats at Rivera, the "Larranaga" at Maldonado, the "Rodo" and the "Lumière" at Canelones, "Uruguay" at Nico Perez and the "Dezer" at Vergara.

There is no marked public preference for a particular sort of film. Audiences can choose from amongst productions of the most varied origins and styles.

On the question of the moral quality of the films shown, the National Bureau for the Defence of Christian Morality, which operates on the system recommended by O.C.I.C. at the Brussels Conference in 1947, informs us that of 201 new films shown in the first part of 1949, 3% were included in Group 4 (Condemned) and 9% in Group 3 (Not Recommended).

Independent criticism and public choice singled out *THE FUGITIVE* and *TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE* for their artistic merit. The former impressed by reason of the human quality of its subject and the exceptional merit of its theme and treatment. *TREASURE OF SIERRA MADRE* stood out because of the fine acting of Walter Huston, Humphrey Bogart and Tim Holt and the successful production of John Huston. These two films are worth preserving for they mark an era in the development of the art of the cinema.

Laurence Olivier's *HENRY V* was acknowledged as a film of high artistic merit although in some quarters it provoked severe criticism. It was particularly regretted that the version shown here was dubbed into Spanish, a process which our public detests.

Among the comedies, *THE BISHOP'S WIFE*, *THE PERILS OF PAULINE* and *UNFAITHFULLY YOURS* were very well received. *BELINDA*, *LIFE TODAY FOR TOMORROW* and *AN ACT OF MURDER* provoked a good deal of interest. *THE LUCK OF THE IRISH* and *DEEP WATERS* also excited favourable comment; the same cannot be said of *WINTER MEETING*, *THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE* and *SORRY, WRONG NUMBER* which were too wordy. *ARC DE TRIOMPHE* failed miserably.

Among French films *LE SILENCE EST D'OR* and *LA BELLE ET LA BETE*, which were perhaps the best of them, did not have very long runs. Other French films of rather a pessimistic tendency had even less success.

ONOREVOLE ANGELINA and *LA FIGLIA DEI CAPITANO* restored the prestige in this country of the Italian cinema which had suffered through a spate of second and third-rate films.

Spain sent us *LOCURA DE AMOR* which made little impression, although *MAR ABIERTO* was an outstanding success and ran for seven weeks.

Although its value as a film was slight, the Argentine film *SE LLAMABA CARLOS GARDEL* must be mentioned for its popular success. The film describes with little imagination or veracity, the life of the famous tango singer of Rio de la Plata who died in tragic circumstances fifteen years ago. As its chief attraction it synchronised the well known actor Roberto Escalada's acting with the voice of Carlos Gardel, using a device that was employed in *THE JOLSON STORY*. Taking this into account the film is technically well made but the character presented to us has nothing to do with the real Gardel.

CORRIENTES, and *CALLE DE ENSUEÑOS* brought a measure of success to the director Roman Vinoly Barreto who by sheer force of personality has attempted to make something out of yet another wretched musical on tango singers.

The moving subject of *LA CUNA VACIA* was not properly exploited. *MUJERES QUE BAILAN* is one of the worst films that Nini Marshall has made and reflects nothing but discredit on her.

We have received from Mexico *LOS NOVIOS*, a much worse film than Gabriel Figueroa's other work.

If we look at the succession of new films over the last few months it seems that the outstanding feature of the 1949 season is the abundance, with few exceptions, of less than mediocre films. For every film of reasonably good artistic quality which is offered us, we have to put up with a succession of re-hashed pieces that are not worth mentioning. All credit then to the success achieved by Laurence Olivier's *HAMLET*, which ran for several weeks, enjoyed most favourable reviews and was received with enthusiasm by the thinking public. The film also succeeded with audiences generally, who, although they may not have understood the work completely, could recognise its high artistic quality. This had the effect of making it a commercial success, so often not the case with this type of production.

Another film with a positive value is *SOTTO IL SOLE DI ROMA*, in the best Italian film style.

The American film industry has sent several films, mostly capable, among which *THE WINDOW*, *THE SET UP*, and *SONG OF THE CITY* were outstanding. In these three films there is evident that desire to include the cinema in the progressive artistic movement which, slowly but surely, is making itself felt in other countries.

Finally, we must mention *LADRON DE SUENOS*, one of the first productions of the young film industry of Uruguay. In order to pass judgement on it, the poor technical means available at present in this country must be taken into account, and the lack of experience of those who have devoted themselves to the industry. To judge impartially we must say that the film easily stands comparison with the bulk of films in Spanish which we receive from abroad. Its scenario is interesting and the desire of the producers to give of their best is evident.

The direction has not a very sure touch but tries to get the best out of poor material. The acting, the faults of which are excusable in actors without film experience, some of them from the stage, has defects which are hard to condone in the case of the stars who do not rise to the same heights as they formerly did in the theatre. What is most to be condemned in the film is the inclusion in the dialogue of vulgar expressions which, far from making it more natural, lower its tone considerably.

To sum up, it may be said that *LADRON DE SUENOS* is a worthy attempt by a new film company.

Ruben Oreiro Vasquez

CATHOLIC ENTERPRISES

MEETING OF GENERAL COMMITTEE OF O. C. I. C. IN LONDON

The Annual Meeting of the General Committee of the *International Catholic Cinema Office* organised in London from 17th to 20th July by the *Catholic Film Institute*, was largely devoted to the study of relations with the film industry. His Excellency Monsignor Montini's letter and the appeal to leaders of the industry, both of which appear in this issue, show clearly the spirit in which the question was approached. The Secretariat was instructed to set up information films for the use of film professionals who wished to get in touch with their colleagues in other countries, and to pursue an enquiry into the present position and future plans of Catholics in the matter of co-operation. A group of experts was present at the talks.

The questions of a Crusade of Prayer, the Apostolate of the film, a world pilgrimage of film professionals to Rome during Holy Year, as well as the exchange of moral ratings of new films, were all discussed, as were also many questions relative to the administration of O. C. I. C., notably the following: the official adoption of the new text of the constitution as approved by the Holy See; the admission of new national members (Argentine and Egypt) and correspondents (Hungary); the report of the Secretariat on the activity of the past year; and the new rules for the O. C. I. C. Prize for the coming year.

The *International Film Review* was also given detailed consideration at the end of which the delegates of the national centres repeated their promises of active co-operation in its production and distribution.

In spite of the very heavy programme of working sessions, the Reverend John A. V. Burke, the indefatigable English Vice-President of O. C. I. C., managed to arrange a number of interesting film shows for his guests, including *JOAN OF ARC*, *SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC*, *LE SORCIER DU CIEL*, *THE POPE AND THE BIRTH OF TELEVISION*, and the world pre-

miere of the documentary *CRUCIFERS TO WALSINGHAM*, produced by Andrew Buchanan for the *Catholic Film Institute*.

Committee members also visited, at the invitation of *John Argyle Productions Ltd.*, the *Nettlefold Studios*, when the film *THE GIRL WHO COULDN'T QUITE*, starring Betty Stockfield, was being shot.

The eminent film critic of the "Daily Telegraph" and Mrs Campbell-Dixon graciously invited the members of the British committee of the International Cinema Press Federation (*Fipresci*) and its President Miss Dyllis Powell, to a reception of the members of the executive committee of O. C. I. C. Similarly, the officials of the Catholic Film Institute gave a dinner for the leading film industrialists J. Arthur Rank, Sir Alexander Korda and Sir Michael Balcon, and the President and General Secretaries of O. C. I. C.

At the end of the conference, a friendly reception at the Newman International Centre, where the meetings had taken place, brought together many representatives of the English cinema, including Mr. A. T. L. Watkins of the Board of Censors, Mr. J. Arthur Rank, Sir Michael Balcon, Mr. John Boulting, Andrew Buchanan, Roger Maxwell and others. After the Mass by which the sessions of July 17th were started, delegates were able to meet the leaders of English Catholic bodies who had also shown considerable interest in the problems of the cinema and the work of O. C. I. C.

We should also mention that a part of the working sessions was graced by the active participation of His Excellency Monsignor Santiago da Silva, Archbishop of Concepcion (Chile) who, happening to be in London, decided to represent his country himself and agreed to celebrate a Low Mass on July 19th for the intentions of O. C. I. C.

Seventeen countries were represented by their delegates during this meeting which was held under the Chairmanship of the President of O. C. I. C., the Abbé Jean Bernard (Luxembourg).

AWARD OF THE O. C. I. C. PRIZE

As in former years, the prizes awarded by the special jury of O. C. I. C. at the Knokke and Venice Festivals, were presented at dignified ceremonies in Brussels and Paris respectively.

On November 11th, during a gala performance organised jointly by the O. C. I. C. and the Professional Association of the Belgian Film Press, at the opening of the latter's "Cinema Fortnight", Mr Roels, President of the Belgian Catholic Film Centre, presented the prize for the film *HOME OF THE BRAVE* to M. Soulat, Manager of *United Artists* in Brussels, who represented the producer, Stanley Kramer. The prize film was then shown and was a great success.

In the case of *CIELO SULLA PALUDE* which was the choice at Venice, the prize was presented to Augusto Genina, the director of the film, by Dr. A. Ruszkowski, General Secretary of O. C. I. C., during a gala performance in Paris on October 16th, on the occasion of the Franco-Italian negotiations for film agreements between the two countries.

Their Excellencies the Papal Nuncios at Paris and Brussels, with several prominent ecclesiastics, leaders of artistic thought and other public figures were present at these functions.

His Excellency Monsignor Roncalli, Papal Nuncio in Paris, wrote to the Secretary-General on this occasion:

"It is particularly heartening in these postwar years, to see success reward the efforts exerted by the film world to make films which should be equally noteworthy for their artistic quality and their high moral content."

At Luxembourg at a gala performance to take place next year on the 4th of February at the Cinema Mari-vaux, the "special mention" diploma awarded at Venice to the film *SCOTT OF THE ANTARCTIC* will be presented. It is hoped that the Reverend J. A. V. Burke, President of

the jury, and Sir Michael Balcon, producer of the film, will be present on this occasion.

FILM COURSES IN PARIS AND LYONS

The "Institut des Sciences de l'Opinion Publique", which holds its courses at the Catholic Institute in Paris, has begun work again. The programme for this year envisages eight lectures on the cinema. The organiser of the course, A. Ruszkowski, has ensured the co-operation of the lecturers who took part in the 1948/49 programme (see our first issue). The first lecture, given by Jean-Pierre Chartier dealt with "Realism and Morality in Films". The second, by Lo Duca, explained "How a Film Succeeds".

Further, thanks to the activity of the Abbé Chassagne, founder of the "Office Familial de Documentation Cinématographique" in Lyons, the Catholic authorities of that city organised a series of public lectures on the cinema, with film shows, in the Cinema Condé. G. Damas spoke on "Cinema Parlance", A. Ruszkowski on "The American Cinema", Ch. Ford on "The German Expressionist Film" and the Abbé Chassagne on "Present Trends in the French Cinema". The success of this first experiment augurs well for its future development.

GERMAN CINE CLUBS STUDY THE CHRISTIAN VIEWPOINT

It is reported in the review "Kultur" for October 1st, 1949, that a further public meeting with the theme "The Church and the Cinema" was arranged during the recent conference of German Societies at Augsburg. The principal speakers were Dr. Anton Kochs, Director of the Catholic Film Bureau in Cologne, and Pastor Werner Hess of Frankfurt, representing the Protestant Church.

In his speech Dr. Kochs defined the Catholic attitude towards the "religious" nature of a film, which is decided far more by the Christian behaviour of its characters towards the problems of everyday life than by merely external appearances of piety. He laid equal stress on the consideration of public susceptibilities in certain countries, instancing the German public's reluctance to allow the presentation of the Holy Mass on the screen.

Pastor Hess gave it as his opinion that the only difference between the Protestant and Catholic attitudes was one of method. He made a particular point of the damage done among young people by films which were literally a negation of civilised standards. The Church could allow film makers to be sure of the success of films of a high level by the education of the public.

A whole day was devoted to the theme "The Cinema and Youth" which was introduced by a speech from a member of the Government, Dr. Meinzhof of Munich.

AN ENGLISH FILM ON FATIMA

Led by the Reverend John A. V. Burke, a group from the *Catholic Film Institute* went to Portugal in October, to make a documentary on Fatima. The famous shrine has already been the subject of many news-reels and even feature films. There is also talk of another big film to mark the Holy Year. More modestly, our English colleagues have simply tried to present to their fellow-countrymen, as well as to others, a faithful picture of the original spirit of Fatima. We shall have occasion to speak of this production again at a future date. Any information about it can be obtained from the *Catholic Film Institute*, 20 Ovington Square, London, S. W. 3.

AN ITALIAN FILM ABOUT THE HOLY SHROUD OF TURIN

The young director Marcello Baldi has just made a most interesting documentary film dealing with the Holy Shroud of Turin entitled FOTOGRAFIA DI CRISTO. The film was supervised from the scientific point of view by Professor Luigi Gedda, President of the Catholic Cinema Centre at Rome. All information regarding this film may be obtained from the Manager of *Edelweiss-Film* — the producing company — Dr. Bruno Fiorenzo, Via Tomacelli, 132, Rome, Italy. We shall deal with this film at greater length in a forthcoming issue.

THE POPE SPEAKS TO YOU

We have received many enquiries about the film mentioned in our last issue, THE POPE AND THE BIRTH OF TELEVISION which contains the complete recording of the mes-

sage addressed to French Television by His Holiness Pius XII.

To obtain this film, which runs for 20 minutes, in 35 or 16 mm., or for any enquiries, write to:

Fédérations Loisirs et Cultures Cinématographiques, 155, Bd. Haussmann, Paris (Tel. ELY. 08-49.)

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF O. C. I. C. IN BUENOS AIRES.

During his visit to Buenos Aires at the beginning of September, Federico Soneira, Vice-President of O. C. I. C. for Latin America, accompanied by members of *Pax Film Company* of Uruguay, Garcia Pardo and Salerno attended a reception at the house of Dr. Rojas Cardenas, General Secretary of C. I. N. E. There were also present Monsignor Carlos Copello (President of C. I. N. E. and Ecclesiastical Adviser to Sincca Films), Father Luis R. Capriotti (Joint Editor of "Criterio" and member of C. I. N. E. Committee), Mr. Victor M. Wulich (Vice-President of the C. I. N. E. and General Editor of "El Pueblo"), Dr. Juan Carlos Frings (Director of the Office of Morality and member of C. I. N. E. Committee), Dr. Bernardo J. Guilhé (President of Sincca Films), Dr. Jaime Potenze (Film critic and member of C. I. N. E. committee) Dr. André Copello (Manager of 16mm. department of *Sincca Films*), and Mr. Rafael I. Montenegro (Manager of the *San Martin distribution company*). During this very interesting meeting, many questions of a general nature relative to O. C. I. C. were discussed as well as those peculiar to the Uruguayan and Argentine cinemas. Personal contact being thus established, a close co-operation was decided upon.

During the same month, Buenos Aires was visited by Dr. Ramon Sugranyes de Franch, General Secretary of Pax Romana, with whom further meetings of great interest were held.

HEAD OF LEGION OF DECENCY CONCLUDES 20% OF U. S PRODUCTION OBJECTIO- NABLE.

Serious deterioration in the moral qualities of postwar motion pictures was noted last week by the Reverend Patrick J. Masterson, executive secretary of the *National Legion*

CATHOLIC ENTERTAINMENT

of Decency, in a report to the triennial convention of the *International Federation of Catholic Alumnae* at the Drake Hotel in Chicago.

"Since November 1945-46, when the percentage of films containing objectionable material was better than 15 per cent, an increase of four per cent over the previous year, the trend has so increased that at the present time better than 25 per cent of the entertainment films are substantially offensive morally speaking either in whole or in part" Father Masterson declared.

Imports partly to blame.

This condition was partially ascribed by the Legion executive to the influx of foreign films of which 42 per cent were found objectionable in the period between November of 1947 and November 1948, and better than 52 per cent in the period between November 1948 and the present time.

Domestic product cannot be absolved of blame, however, Father Masterson said, pointing out that it also is morally deteriorating. "Today almost 20 per cent of the domestic pictures are considered to contain substantially morally objectionable elements", he told the delegates. "This is the highest figure since the formation of the Legion of Decency".

Father Masterson also took occasion to condemn excessive brutality in pictures, declaring that "because motion picture has such inherent power this is a particularly noteworthy factor. To see in a darkened theatre an attractive personality exercising extreme cruelty upon another human being cannot help but have a coarsening and brutalising effect upon an audience", he said. Referring to *Westerns*, Father Masterson said it was regrettable to find in too many of these films, scenes of violence which are calculated to have an extremely disturbing effect upon the youngsters and impressionable people.

Effects of story.

Father Masterson stressed that the Legion was not concerned so much with the story in pictures as with the effect of the screenplay on the audience and the correct evaluation of sin and evil. He appealed to his listeners and to all Catholic fraternal and religious organisations "to unite with all decent minded citizens against the flood of immoral pictures

which are being shown on our entertainment screen".

Motion Picture Herald, Sept. 3 1949

AMERICAN BISHOPS STRESS LEGION BAN ON "BEYOND THE FOREST"

The Most Reverend William A. Scully, Coadjutor of the Albany Diocese, and Chairman of the Catholic Bishop's Committee on Motion Pictures, urged parishioners of St. Mary's Church, Troy, to stay away from the Warner picture, *BEYOND THE FOREST*. The film has drawn a "C" or condemned rating from the Legion of Decency.

At the same time the Most Reverend Edmund F. Gibbons, Bishop of Albany, issued a call to "Catholics and all who value decency in entertainment" to refrain from patronising *BEYOND THE FOREST*. His stand was supported by an editorial in *The Evangelist*, the organ of the Albany diocese, which criticised the motion picture division of the State Education Department for licensing the film.

Bishop Scully criticised the production company for the speed with which the picture was released following its review by the Legion of Decency committee and expressed understanding of exhibitors who bought *BEYOND THE FOREST* without knowing its contents.

(Motion Picture Herald, Nov. 5 1949)

HAITI

Extract from a letter from Monsignor P. Bellec, vicar-general of Port-au-Prince.

We have no national film centre here. Two theatre managers with cinemas equipped for 35mm., bring films in, one by way of Martinique, the other from the U. S. A., and hire them to five or six provincial cinemas. As for the moral value of the films there are some good and some bad. Another theatre manager who uses 16mm., buys or hires his films in France and lets them out to our three parochial cinemas (except for those few which we cannot accept because graded "adults only" or "not recommended") and to a few others. But how difficult it is to get good, interesting films. The best way to combat bad films is to show good ones and make them pay so as to interest producers. Of course in a small country

such as ours, our return will be proportionately small but we shall make every effort in this direction.

We are also concerned about films for children. There are thousands of children attending school here in Port-au-Prince. I am trying to buy education and catechetical films in the hope of finding enough interested schools to defray the expense.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CINEMA IN SCHOOLS

We have already brought to notice the work of the "Fédération Loisirs et Culture Cinématographique" in the field of popular film education; it publishes ever so often collections of film reviews in leaflet form and has a programme advice service which is available to organisers of private shows.

In October 1948 F. L. E. C. set up a *schools service*, intended to bring education in the art of the cinema into the schools.

Up to that time the cinema had had no place in school curricula. It seems a paradox that pupils are given a training in literature, the theatre and even the fine arts, which most of them will never have the opportunity to use, while there is no class in the syllabus for the cinema, which the majority of the children will attend regularly for the rest of their lives.

To supply this lack the first difficulties to be overcome are practical ones; an introduction to the cinema is not possible without showing films and schools in possession of projectors and a room for shows are rare indeed; the F. L. E. C. schools service, therefore, supplies schools with projectors, programmes and special lectures. An annual invitation is levied on all pupils who wish to attend the sessions which are held every month.

There is no question in these courses of education by means of film, but of an introduction to the art of the cinema. The sessions are designed for older pupils (14 or 15 years and upwards) and the films shown are ordinary commercial features. Obviously the choice of such films is difficult, since they must not only be suitable for an audience of adolescents but must be of sufficient artistic interest. Before each showing a short talk introduces the pupils to the rudiments of the language, aesthetics and history of the cinema.

After the film, a discussion is held with the purpose of forming in the students the habit of appreciating a film, of justifying their judgements and of analysing what they have seen.

During the school year 1948-49, this service reached several thousand scholars in the free schools in and around Paris. As was to be expected, the sessions were followed with enthusiasm; seeing a film in between a Latin and a mathematics lesson was an innovation which could not fail to be well received. The results after one year's working are extremely interesting; the pupils who followed last year's course show a lively reaction to the first films shown this year and can understand and discuss them.

The cinema in schools is in its infancy, but its development is inevitable and necessary. Complaints are often made of the evil influence of the cinema on young people. It will not suffice, however, to forbid adolescents to attend it. The day must come when they will see films; if they have received no training in this field they will watch any film and submit passively to its influence. If, on the other hand, they have acquired a certain amount of cultural appreciation of the cinema they will have the equipment for choosing and judging the films at their disposal. The time is coming when an intellectual training which gives no place to the cinema will be considered as incomplete as one which takes no account of literature or history.

THE CHRISTOPHERS ARE TO PRODUCE FILMS.

Father James Keller, the moving spirit of the "Christophers" of which we spoke at length in our second issue, announces the early production of a series of six films, directed against the cardinal sins. We learn, moreover, from "*Film World*" of November, 1949, that this series may be extended to 30 films, each lasting half an hour, encouraging a more active participation in local affairs. The films will be made in Hollywood under the supervision of Leo McCarey who will also direct some of them.

RELIGIOUS FILMSTRIPS FOR GRADE SCHOOLS ANNOUNCED IN THE U. S. A.

Designed primarily for grade-school use in teaching of religion, a series of filmstrips is announced by the

Catechetical Guild Educational Society. Filmstrips combine the work of French artists with English texts, and are in black and white.

First three are: THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE HAIL MARY, and THE CREED IN THE LITURGICAL YEAR. Each is 50 frames.

Scheduled for release next is an 18-strip set on Old Testament Bible history. Some 600 pictures are supplemented by about 200 frames of text. Grade level is for grade and high school classes, college and seminary groups.

(*Film World* November 1949).

THE MASS TELEVISED EVERY SUNDAY.

The first Mass ever to be televised was at Christmas 1948 in Notre Dame.

We have already noted the retransmission last Easter Sunday of the message addressed by HIS HOLINESS PIUS XII to the audiences of French television. Since the beginning of October, the Eiffel Tower transmitter broadcasts every Sunday at 5.30 p. m. a televised religious programme consisting of news, interviews and the direct transmission of an evening Mass. The first programme was opened with an interview of Monsignor Spellman. On Mission Sunday Monsignor Bressoles gave a sermon on the Holy Childhood and the Reverend Father O'Reilly gave a commentary on a film which he himself had made in the Pacific mission field. The Mass itself is followed by a congregation of those who, prevented from attending morning Mass, can get to an evening one, in accordance with the indulgent in force in Paris. For many viewers this broadcast was a real revelation of the powerful medium for religious education offered by television; rarely is it given to the faithful to follow so closely even the smallest gesture of the celebrant, with an explanatory commentary, and to hear in their own homes every word of the Mass for the day. Already parish groups are being formed by the fortunate owners of receivers. In view of the enormous development which television promises in the years to come, it can be foreseen that these Sunday religious broadcasts will be able to reach the most distant and less favoured parishes, giving to every Catholic the opportunity of uniting in prayer with all those of

the Faith who, at the same moment, will be following on the screens of their own receivers the movements of the Church's great act of prayer.

NEW DEPARTURES AT LUXEMBOURG

Under the title of "Commission Catholique des Puissances d'Opinion" an organisation has recently been launched at Luxembourg comprising delegates from all the branches of Catholic Action, together with specialists representing the cinema, press, theatre and radio.

The purpose of the Commission is to improve the technical, aesthetic and moral level of programmes and publications, and to favour the distribution of specifically Christian productions.

To this end the Commission will exercise a threefold influence: on the legislative and executive powers, on film professionals, (on the basis of a friendly and frank collaboration), and on the public.

It is intended from the outset that this organisation should represent Luxembourg on the councils of the International Catholic Cinema Office.

The "Centrale Catholique du Film et du Livre" — a co-operative society, will continue as hitherto to deal with the exploitation of the substandard films of which they have need and to obtain the best possible conditions for their distribution.

Also constituted at Luxembourg under the title of the Luxembourg Society for Co-production and Cinema Co-operation, a company limited to a capital of 550,000 Luxembourg francs — which is obliged under its status to interest itself in "films which propagate social, religious, humanitarian or moral ideas or concern themselves with the great characters of humanity".

The first film to be made by SOCOPA is a short documentary in colour dealing with the marital devotion of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and should serve as the Luxembourgish Film Offering for the Holy Year.

The direction has been entrusted to Dr. Ulrich Kayser who is using the new *Gevacolour* process. The film will be made in French and German versions — the latter entitled EWIGE MADONNA. The shooting has begun and the film should be ready for release at the beginning of spring.

ECHOS

PROTESTANT FILM ACTIVITIES IN AMERICA

The *Protestant Film Commission* (P. F. C.) official agency of nineteen principal Protestant denominations with a total of 200,000 places of worship, regularly produces religious and teaching films.

According to a recent statement made by Paul F. Heard, the Executive Secretary, of five new films from this source, four are destined for Japan. *KENJI COMES HOME* — a film lasting 35 minutes, tells the story of how a Japanese prisoner of war, who, on his return, has to choose between Shintoism and Communism, on the one hand, and Christianity and democracy on the other. *FUJITA, ORPHAN OF JAPAN*, also 35 minutes long, is the sad history of a child. *KYOTO STORY*, a colour film lasting 30 minutes, attempts to demonstrate the effect of United States democracy in Japan.

Among other films, in addition to *BEYOND OUR OWN* and *MY NAME IS HAN*, the Commission has presented *PREJUDICE* which, it is said "is the first film made from a purely religious point of view for commercial distribution". It was shown, as a result of the efforts of the distributors (*Religious Films Association*) for the first time on October 17th in more than 100 cinemas at the same time.

The authors of this film have tried to denounce the wickedness of hatred between different racial or social groups.

At the moment, other short films for children and young people are being made at the *Nassour studios*.

The greater part of the religious teaching films made in the United States by commercial societies are of a Protestant complexion. Nevertheless they are made with the idea of rendering them acceptable also in Catholic schools.

THE CINEMA AND UNESCO

The fourth General Conference of UNESCO held at Paris in September had an administrative complexion and relatively few basic problems were examined.

As for the Cinema, apart from the intervention by Myrna Loy which

we deal with elsewhere — and some illusions on the statement of some of the principal delegates (M. Georges Bidault for example) it was chiefly a question of facilities for the international circulation of worthwhile scientific and educative films.

One gathers that the project for agreement "on the importation of material of an educative, scientific and cultural character" has so far had few practical results. The Conference has not discovered any decisive course — but it did pay great attention to the interesting proposition put forward by the French delegation that the Directors General should study, together with the national commissions, the possibility of awarding to scientific and educative films, a visa of approval and recommending their cultural value.

The inevitable delays common to inter-governmental organisations make it likely that the question will take a long time to study. However it seems to us that even now it should be possible to make some practical progress if UNESCO were to make use of the experience of private international organisations which, as a result of the connections which they have in centres interested in the subject, could very efficaciously contribute to the intensification of exchanges between the countries.

CONGRESS OF THE "ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DU CINEMA SCIENTIFIQUE" IN BRUSSELS.

After Paris (1947) and London (1948), Brussels in its turn welcomed the A. I. C. S. for its third congress, from September 30th to October 5th. Thirty-two countries had sent delegates or observers. The Holy See had appointed the Abbé Bernard, President of O. C. I. C., as its observer.

The general assemblies were devoted in part to administrative questions, examination of credentials, secretary's report, election of new officers and so on. The popular English delegate, J. Maddison, was elected President for the next term of office.

Next, the various commissions set up in London in 1948 reported on their work. Certain of them, which had had limited purposes, were dissolv-

ed, their work being finished. Others were made permanent sub-sections or working parties. Among the most important of these, mention should be made of the permanent committee on research films, and the permanent medical committee. To facilitate their tasks and to reduce the difficulties of communication to a minimum, it was decided that one or two countries should ensure the working of these different groups, with greater reference either to the general assembly or to the council.

A festival of scientific films was included in the Congress, and in five public and five semi-public shows presented the remarkable number of 76 films. Certain of these presented occasion for some interesting discussion.

"Beaux-Arts" publicised a special number devoted to scientific films for the Congress, giving a full and clear review of the present situation in regard to them.

The next A. I. C. S. Congress will be held in Milan about the 20th September 1950.

INTERVENTION BY THE PRESIDENT OF O. C. I. C.

The Holy See's delegate to the Congress, the Abbé Bernard proposed the following resolution:

"*The Third Congress of A. I. C. S. opposes the ever increasing number of pseudo-scientific films which, under the pretext of serving science by popularising its methods and achievements, or by warning against certain dangers, pursue, in fact, the lowest commercial ends.*"

Urging his proposition, the delegate made the point that he aimed, among others, at the many so-called psycho-analytical films.

Another delegate having opposed the motion, on the grounds of preserving the liberty of artistic creation, the Abbé Bernard disagreed with this opinion, arguing that even if art is independent in itself, its exercise and use by men is bound by moral law which directs all human activities of any sort.

The delegate of the Holy See won the day and the resolution was adopted.

EUROPEAN SUCCESS OF «JOAN OF ARC».

The European career of Victor Fleming's film on the great French saint and national heroine, Joan of Arc, began brilliantly at a gala per-

formance on October 13th at the Paris Opera in aid of the fund for the reconstruction of the Musée Jeanne d'Arc at Orleans, which was destroyed during the war.

Next, the film ran for five weeks in the two biggest Paris cinemas, *Gaumont Palace and Rex*, breaking all box-office records. This popular success far surpassed expectation and it was the more remarkable for the fact that several Paris critics, even in the Catholic press, had found serious fault with the conception and production of the film. Others, however, praised it, emphasising the care for historic accuracy, the importance of the direction and Ingrid Bergman's performance. Very similar reactions were observed in most other French and European cities, as the film appeared at almost the same time in several countries by reason of the new method of large scale releases employed by American distributors. Public reception of the film was enthusiastic everywhere, and we believe that that is a very important factor. It would be useless to make films of Christian inspiration if, by their being above the heads of the general public, their effect is limited to a very narrow circle of intellectuals who can be as easily reached through other means. We believe that, side by side with films of a deeper and more advanced artistic and human content, there is always room for frankly popular films to attract the masses to shows with high moral themes.

A PRODUCTION CODE IN JAPAN

Following Hollywood's example, Japanese film industrialists have concluded an agreement which from now on will constitute their production code. The main object is not to offend public morality in sensual matters, but the code goes even further; there must be nothing damaging to the sanctity of marriage and the home. All representation of murder, theft, smuggling, or the use of drugs are excluded and as a reaction against former militarist traditions, war and military strength must not be presented in a favourable light.

Would not this be an excellent opportunity for the Christian world to show, by the spiritual content of its film productions, the positive values which should fill the place of the crimes which have been banished from the screen?

PROPOSED FILMS ON THE CHURCH'S ACTIVITY IN URUGUAY

The *Uruguay al día* film company is to make documentary films amongst which three will deal with the activity of the Church in Uruguay. They will form a historic synthesis, beginning in the times when missionaries arrived with the Spanish explorers and conquerors and continuing up to the present day.

CINEMA PROPAGANDA IN THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE

The month of October saw important campaigns carried on on both sides of the Atlantic by the whole of the film industries of the United States and France, to attract larger audiences into the cinemas.

The methods used were different, having regard to the different situations in the two countries, but the coincidence of the campaigns is worth considering.

In France a large proportion of the population is still not affected by the cinema. The causes of this are numerous, some of them being unavoidable, but others being capable of removal if more were known about them and organised methods used to attack them.

One of the basic causes is the quality of present-day films, about which a great deal could be said. We do not believe it possible to attract a numerous and faithful public either by films of a repugnant vulgarity or by sadistic spectacles which leave the spectator disgusted. The public must be convinced that in going to the cinema they will not only not be wasting time but that they will not be confronted with an exhibition of vice or crime.

For this reason the American campaign was based largely on the moral aspect of production, realising that the famous Code, in spite of its many defects, has been of great service to the industry. For the same reason the appeal which O. C. I. C. is launching to the directors of the industry in different countries, the text of which appears in this issue, should strike a responsive chord, even if the response is not disinterested.

A subsidiary aspect of the question was noted by certain publicity executives of American films, who no longer believe in the usual bluff for

their publicity, and consider that the public should be told the truth on the nature of the films presented to them.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE "STARS"

The American review "*Movie Life*" devotes six illustrated pages in its October issue to religious life in Hollywood. There are pictures of artists taken during religious ceremonies or other activities of a religious nature. Here are a few names of the stars who appear in it: Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, June Haver, Ann Blyth, Don de Fore, Dan Duryea, Loretta Young, Stephen McNally, Bing Crosby, Lisa-beth Scott, Dan Dailey and others.

NORMAN Mc LAREN AT THE SERVICE OF VISUAL EDUCATION IN CHINA

The UNESCO Courier announces that the celebrated author of animated cartoons, Norman McLaren, has gone to China as technical advisor to a team which has been for some time working to introduce audio-visual means to the Chinese people in their educational campaign, particularly in the department of Social Hygiene.

Under the direction of Hugh Hubbard, the Manager of the team, six Chinese artists are engaged in making elementary films to illustrate the dangers of epidemics and the means of combatting them. There is no doubt that the counsel of Norman McLaren will be most valuable and will result in the production of films as remarkable as those made for the same purpose for the Indians under the aegis of the United Nations.

CARDINAL MINDSZENTY ON THE SCREEN

First announced with a fanfare of publicity by the *Warner Brothers* and then dropped in embarrassing silence, the life of Joseph CARDINAL MINDSZENTY has found its way to the screen under different auspices. *GUILTY OF TREASON* is the title of the picture, which was completed recently by a small independent company headed by Jack Wra-ther, Edward A. and Robert Golden (father and son) and Emmet

Lavery, author of the screenplay. Charles Bickford is starred as the Cardinal and Elizabeth Risdén appears as his mother. The film not yet released to theatres, was directed by Felix Feist.

REGULATION OF THE NON-COMMERCIAL CINEMA IN FRANCE.

In the Sept. 23rd 49 issue the "Journal Officiel" of the French Republic published a decree of the presidency of the council of Ministres no 49-1275 Sept. 21st 49 "establishing the statute of the non-commercial cinema."

Though the application of this decree is not yet ready chiefly because of the fierce opposition met with in professional circles and a protest from the National Confederation of the French Cinema, the commercial-cinema owners' organisation, the document is of such importance for all those who in the various countries have a concern in the spreading of cinematographic culture by non-commercial ways that we cannot but invite all our friends to read it through.

Paragraph 4, the most contested but also the most important, withdraws from commercial regulation the cinema sittings, be they even regular ones on condition they are organised in accordance with:

*5 (admittance reserved to bearers of membership cards and their non-paying guests;

*6 (investment of the fees and receipts for the benefit of cinematographic culture or social and charity works);

*7 (programmation by means of federations national or regional licensed ad hoc);

*8 (rendering accurate account of the receipts disposed of).

The point is that the sittings have to be organised on behalf of associations for the people's education affiliated to one of the various associations or federations national or regional authorized (by joint decree of the Minister of Education and the Minister in charge of the cinema after contacting eventually other Ministers interested) to propagate culture by means of films.

The most serious consequence would make itself felt on the fiscal side the entertainment tax being suppressed, a tax so detrimental to the undertakings of ciné-clubs and similar forms of cinematographic culture.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA FILMS.

Encyclopaedia Britannica Films has celebrated its twentieth anniversary of producing educational sound motion pictures with a Twentieth Birthday-Christmas party on December 16th, under the Chairmanship of President C. Scott Fletcher.

Since its founding in the fall of 1929, the company has increased its library of 16mm. sound films for classrooms to a total of more than 320 different subjects, making it the world's largest library of sound films made especially for teaching purposes.

EBFilms now blanket the curriculum from kindergarten to college with motion pictures in primary science, chemistry, physics, human and animal biology, health and hygiene, social studies, history, arithmetic, athletics, home economics, arts and

crafts, music, teacher training and child development.

These films are now used in thousands of schools both in the United States and in more than 50 countries throughout the world.

Since its inception *EBFilms* has always produced educational action pictures in close collaboration with subject matter authorities. Experts and faculty members from more than 60 institutions of learning have collaborated in the planning, research and production of *EBFilms* during the last twenty years. While its films have been integrated consistently with the school curriculum during all this time, *EBF* was the first educational motion picture producer to publish a correlation showing how its 300 products are linked with the units in nearly 300 widely-used textbooks in use in American schools. These books represent the publications of about twenty textbook publishers.

BOOKS

IL FILM DEL DOPOGUERRA (Post-War Film) 1945-1949. A Series of Publications made for the International Exhibition of film Art at Venice. Editions *Bianco e Nero* Rome. Vol. 268 pp. 1949.

For the first volume of the new collection of works on the cinema, the Biennale of Venice has invited a group of international critics to write about the effect of the postwar film in their respective countries. The result is an interesting and instructive volume and one of unequal value.

In this panorama of the different countries it has not always been possible to maintain a due sense of proportion and limitation. For example it is astonishing to find that the report from the United States occupies the same number of pages as that from Poland and is half the length of that from Germany. On the other hand in the recapitulation of the Exhibitions at Venice we find on page 264 a list of the "best films" of 1947 which is very arbitrarily compiled. Again, in the excellent and detailed study by Guido Aristarco on "La Littérature Cinématographique d'après-guerre" we find on page 239 a sentence about the brochure by Canon A. Brohé — "Cinéma et Apostolat Paroissial"

which seems to contrast the confessional character of this work with the "objectivity" of another brochure on "Film and People". Would it not be more accurate to speak of "neutrality"? However in spite of these reservations, we cannot but recommend this work which provides a solid documentation often unobtainable to those interested in contemporary cinematographic activities.

MODERNAS TENDENCIAS DO CINEMA EUROPEU.

Collection Projecção No. 1. Published by the Portuguese Cine-club, Rua do Clube Fenianos 29-2, Porto. 1 vol. 84 pp. 1949.

Intended for a more modest purpose, the instruction of the members of a Ciné-Club, this Portuguese publication comprises a series of translations and reproductions of studies by European critics on French, Italian, English and Swiss films. There is an excellent commentary by Jacq. Bourgeois and Manuel de Azevedo on Blassetti's film, *UN JOUR DANS LA VIE*.

LE FILM SUR L'ART. Unesco. Editions de la Connaissance, Brussels. 72 pp. Illustrated. 1949.

We must thank *Unesco* for having given us another impression of the special number of *Les Arts Plastiques* devoted to "Film sur L'Art".

Excellentlly presented with an introduction by René Micha on the difficulty of the problem intrinsic to this type of production, the series provides a summary at once condensed and complete of the thought and action in this domain in the principal countries. It is particularly interesting to find detailed extracts from the scenario of RUBENS together with fragments of the corresponding musical accompaniment. At the end of the text the editors have placed a catalogue, an international repertoire of films on Art grouped according to country of origin which is, as far as we know, the first publication of this kind. It should prove of the greatest service to those whose task it is to foster artistic taste by means of the cinema whether by teaching, cultural societies and in other ways. This beautifully printed edition on art paper with many well chosen illustrations makes a volume which it is pleasant both to have and to use.

PRESS, FILM, RADIO. *Unesco*, 19 Av. Kleber, Paris. 320 pp. 1949.

Another publication from *Unesco*, this is the third annual volume of the enquiry made throughout the world to discover the technical requirements of the various countries from the point of view of their equipment in Press, Film and Radio. It contains the results of the enquiry in the following fourteen countries: Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Turkey, Argentine, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay. It is a mine of information, particularly in the realm of the educational and instructional film and is absolutely indispensable for anyone whose activity in this domain is on the international plane. In addition this volume contains recommendations from the Commission on Technical Requirements as well as a report on the activities of the *General Secretariat of Unesco* in these fields of enquiry.

EDUCATION CINEMATOGRA-
PHIQUE by Rev. Claude S. J. in
the collection of Religious Studies
"La Pensée Catholique" Liège 1949

This tiny book is the testimony of an experience derived from the ranks of the college cinemas in Bel-

gium. The essential problems to which cinema culture gives rise are dealt with in very precise and concise manner: particularly the importance of the film in present and future civilisation; with an analysis of the psychological attitude of the spectator and the difficulties one encounters in attempting to develop his critical faculties. The whole study is profoundly supported with precise examples and provides a method of analysis and discussion which will prove of the greatest use to those who wish to give in their turn a proper appreciation of films to their young people.

We give elsewhere the results obtained in France by the school service of the F. L. E. C. The conclusions and the methods are in both cases complimentary. The excellent studies of Father Claude should stimulate an increasing number of educationalists to follow this twofold example. We shall not cease to repeat that the future of film production depends on the formation of the public. What more efficacious method for forming tomorrow's audiences than to introduce the cinema into the educational syllabus?

J. L. Tallenay.

GUIDE DU CINEMA DANS L'ENSEIGNEMENT, Published by C. C. A. C. Service CEDOC 10, Rue de l'Orme, Brussels. Editions Universitaires. Paris-Brussels, 48 pp. 1949.

Many educationalists who wish to use film in teaching lament, and with reason, the lack of easily consulted books on the subject. CEDOC (Cinéma Educatif, Documentaire et Culturel) an organisation recently founded in Belgium by the Abbé Joseph Roger, and which, owing to his zeal, has already spread considerably, provides them with an excellent manual. His *Guide du Cinéma dans l'Enseignement*, devised for use in Belgian scholastic establishments, will prove of great service even beyond the bounds of that country. In addition in short studies on "Children and the Cinema", "Adolescents", and "Teaching", he defines the respective positions of the Cinema and the Cinescope in teaching and explains in detail the history and the present functions of CEDOC. The whole provides an excellent opportunity for demonstrating a scheme for cinematographic activities in school. There are extracts from letters from

educational centres recommending the usefulness of the service.

REPORT ON THE SECOND ANNUAL CONGRESS of the *International Scientific Film Association*, London 1948. 98 pp. Private distribution only. 4 Great Russell Street, London W. C. 1.

The International Scientific Film Association, at the close of their 1949 Congress decided to publish the report of the previous year's Congress. Besides administrative questions inseparable from such a report, there are excellent summaries of discussions on the various aspects of the scientific cinema today, as well as a list of the films presented at the Congress, with a short appreciation of some of them. We particularly recommend the resumé (pp. 79 to 92) of an important debate on the film in scientific research with, among others, a communication from Dr. T. E. Allibone, F. R. S., on "The Applications of the Film in Physics."

ENTERTAINMENT FILMS FOR CHILDREN 7949. Illustrated booklet 22 pp. published by Children's Entertainment Films, G-B Instructional Ltd. 6 Vigo Street, London, W. 1.

Our readers will be already familiar as a result of Mary Field's article, with the great work accomplished by the *Rank Organisation* under the direction of Miss Field to ensure a regular output of feature films specially devised for children from 7 to 15 years of age. A success greater than similar enterprises in other countries has been achieved. The results of this work are described in detail in the booklet here cited. This organisation has, between 1944 and 1948, produced 149 films of which 19 are feature films, 32 are serials, 7 travel pictures, 18 natural history films and 48 are magazine episodes. The programme for 1949 provides for the making of 5 feature-length films, of these 4 are to be made outside Great Britain. The booklet contains interesting observations on the subject of the reactions of children and indicates the complexity of the reactions problems which have to be solved in productions of this kind.

EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL INTEREST FILMS, sound and silent. The Educational Catalogue

of the G-B Film Library, 108 pp. illustrated 1949 G-B Instructional Ltd., Imperial House, 80-82 Regent Street, London W. 1.

A catalogue of educational films made or distributed by the *Rank Organisation*. Each film is briefly described with the necessary technical indications. Classification according to Dewey's decimal system facilitates reference. There are some hints with regard to the use of 16mm. projectors and the method of hiring films. A note on the feature films available in 16mm. indicates the possibilities of organising recreational programmes and the general procedure desirable for schools which possess a sub-standard projector. A list of religious films is to be found on pages 96-99.

PRELIMINARY INTERNATIONAL CATALOGUE OF FILMS DEALING WITH SOCIAL WELFARE ACTIVITIES. Supplement. United Nations Organisation. Social and Economic Council. Doc. E/CN/5/101/Add. 1. June 28 th 1949. Polycopied. Private circulation only. 140 pp.

While waiting for the realisation of the United Nations' intention to publish a printed edition of the International Catalogue of films devoted to social activities in the various countries, we are glad to draw the attention of our readers to the existence of this very interesting document. Not only is each film noted and given a brief description, but at the end of the brochure there is to be found a list of the addresses of all the tact for hiring or purchasing the films. Here are the principal chapters of the Catalogue: Children's Welfare; Protection of the Family; Public Assistance; Habitation, Workers' Health and Social Assistance; Social Environment of Youth; Crime Prevention; Mental Hygiene and Psychiatric Social Work; Social Environment of the Sick; Army Social Service etc.

VISUAL AIDS. FILMS AND FILMSTRIPS. Part II. Geography for Secondary Schools. Educational Foundation for Visual Aids, 33 Queen Anne Street, London W. 1. 1949, 1 vol. 150 pp.

The *Educational Foundation for Visual Aids* has undertaken the publication of a large catalogue of moving films and strips destined for English

educationalists. Volume II contains an impressive list of films dealing with geography and cognate subjects.

MOTION PICTURES. Classified by National Legion of Decency, February 1936 — November 1948. National Legion of Decency, 453 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. 1 Vol. 158 pp. 1949.

For leading Catholics all over the world, but particularly for those who closely follow the moral evolution of the cinema, the reprinting in one volume of the moral citations by the American Legion of Decency of films from the beginning of their work of classification until the close of 1948, presents an extremely valuable document.

It includes 6488 titles of films of which 615 are foreign productions. The reasons for reservations made in the case of certain films are also reproduced. Of these 6488 films only 66 have been entirely condemned, that is to say, scarcely 1.02%; against 689 (10.62%) the Legion has formulated partial objections. More than a half of the total, therefore, (3320 films: 51.7%) have been accepted without reservation for the general

public, including children. These leaflets, carrying the classifications of an organisation regarded as one of the most severe from the moral point of view, ought finally to destroy the opinion unhappily too widely held, that films are altogether bad. Indeed, these leaflets demonstrate how unjustified are the accusations that such moral censorship from Christian organisations are antagonistic to the best interest of film production. These leaflets provide, in fact, a good answer to those who pretend to disregard moral classification of films on the grounds that they must remain up to date with the evolution of the cinema. Is it not possible to find among the 89% of films passed as unobjectionable, a sufficient number of works capable of contributing to our cinema culture?

DIE FILMZENSUR IN DER SCHWEIZ, by Heinz Aeppli, Affoltern a. A., 1949, 1 vol. 149 pp.

The first part of this doctorate thesis for the University of Zurich studies the problems of censorship in the widest sense and merits the attention of the foreign reader. The second part has a more regional interest.

ARTICLES

Pédagogie. Monthly Review for parents and teachers. Special Cinema Number. November 1949. Paris, 5, Rue de Madrid.

Readers of the Review will already know, through his excellent article in our first issue this year, of the interest shown by the Reverend Pierre Faure, S. J., in the questions of the film in education. Here is another proof of that interest: the special number devoted to the question by the review "Pédagogie" of which he is the moving spirit. This number forms as it were a sequence to "Teaching and the Cinema", a special issue of the "Teachers' Notebooks for Secondary Teaching" published on June 15th, 1949, by the "Association des Educateurs des Classes Nouvelles, 160 Rue Pierre Corneille, Lyon." Unfortunately we must limit ourselves to giving the titles of the chief contributions and we advise those of our readers who are interested in this question to obtain the pu-

blication, one of the most important which Catholics have attempted in this field. The first part of the number opens with a general study by Pierre Chambre on "The Cinema and Education"; it continues with an article by Robert Couffignal, who is also known to our readers, on "The Cinema and the Teaching of French", in which many teachers will find aspects of the question which they had not considered. Next, Dr. Pierson gives a resume of a conference which he gave at Casablanca on "Young People and Pictures". Maurice Rigaux deals with the delicate question of "Adolescents and the Cinema" and the Reverend P. Claude and F. Cocquerez give some interesting results of experiments which have already been carried out. An article by Pierre Michaut, with many references, on the documentary and educational films shown at festivals and so often ignored by the press, and a questionnaire which inaugu-

rates a new enquiry into the use of the cinema in teaching, make up the rest of the review.

Dux. Catholic Handbook for all teachers in the free schools of the Netherlands and Belgium. Special number on the Instructional Cinema and the educational role of the film. June 1949, Lange Putstraat 44 's-Hertogenbosch (Netherlands) or 'De Pijl', Congressstraat 51, Brussels.

Published in Flemish for Dutch and Belgian educationalists, the teaching review *Dux* has also issued an interesting special number, with the co-operation of Dr. J. Peters (Suggestive Power of the Cinema, Evolution of the Art of the Cinema), Dr. Y. M. M. Fortmann (Juvenile Delinquents and the Cinema), Jac. Dirkes, S. C. J., S. P. van 't Hof and Dr. W. J. M. Boonekamp, all of whom suggest practical means of education by means of the cinema. There are also notes on film literature and Catholic organisations.

Vie Etudiante. Magazine of the students of Montreal University. Special Cinema Number, November 1949, 430 est. Sherbrooke Street, Montreal 24.

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the special edition which our friends in Montreal University have devoted to the cinema. A deep impression is obtained from these enthusiastic articles inspired by the *University Fisher Society*, of which our correspondent Jacques Girardeau is one of the most active members, that the problem of the cinema has become one of the major preoccupations of leading Canadian Catholics. Ralph Hodgson, ex-director of the magazine, formulates its aims in these words:

"While awaiting the day, which is doubtless far distant, when film courses, both aesthetic and technical, will be given in all colleges and convents, 'Vie Etudiante' hopes to make, through this issue, its modest contribution to the study, by the students themselves, of the phenomenon of the cinema".

Les Beaux Arts. Weekly Art Review. Special number on Scientific Film, published on the occasion of the 3rd Congress of the Association Internationale de Cinema Scienti-

fique. Sept. 1949, Brussels, 10, Rue Royale.

Under the direction of Luc Haesaerts, who organised the Congress, Jean Painlevé, John Maddison, Jean Cleinge, C. P. Mountford, Jean Korngold, Dr. Rene Pollart, Otto Storch, Michael Michaelis, Jindrich Brichta, Dr. R. C. Mac Keith, Eric Boden, Alfred Liljenstroem, Jim Oswald, the Reverend Leo Lunders, and M. Prokonov explain the difficult aspects of the scientific film in their respective countries. Interesting photographs add to the attraction of this issue.

Films and Political Propaganda. By the Reverend John A. V. Burke in the *Tablet*, 24th September, 1949.

A particularly significant review of the films shown at the Venice Festival and the critics' reactions to them, has been published in the great English Catholic weekly by the President of the O. C. I. C. jury at the Biennale, the Reverend John A. V. Burke. A large part of the article deals with the attitude of a certain section of criticism with regard to films of a religious inspiration, which gives the author an opportunity of expressing his very favourable judgement on Augusto Genina's CIELO SULLA PALUDE.

Opiniones sobre el cine religioso de cinco directores que lo hicieron. (Opinions on religious films by five producers who have undertaken them). Enquiry published by "Incunabla", organ of the Pontifical University of Salamanca, October 1949, San Pablo 17, Salamanca.

José Luis Saez de Heredia, producer of THE HARVEST IS GREAT, Rafael Gil, producer of THE FAITH, Jian de Orduna, producer of WHITE MISSION, Ruiz Castillo (LA MANIGUA SIN DIOS) and Diaz Morales (CAPTAIN LOYOLA) answer the following three questions put to them by the editor:

1) What is the chief difficulty of religious films?

2) How should they be made?

3) Do they exercise a real and effective moral influence?

The answers to this last question are unanimously in the affirmative, and Diaz Morales goes so far as to say that the moral effect of certain recent productions was greater than that of the press or of religious conferences. Ruiz Castillo is of the opinion that religious films are not only those of the lives of the saints, but every type of film which teaches a lesson in Christian morality.

National Types as Hollywood Presents Them by Siegfried Kracauer in the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Spring 1949).

Author of a much discussed work "From Caligari to Hitler", published by Princeton University Press in 1947, Siegfried Kracauer, at the request of UNESCO, is himself to review American films from an international standpoint, in order to find out how foreigners of different nationalities were presented in them, and what influence they might have on international understanding. The study which we mention can be obtained in separate form from UNESCO (19 Av. Kleber, Paris 16) and gives the results of this enquiry, especially insofar as it concerns the pictures given by Hollywood of Great Britain and Russia. Although the author's references are plentiful, not all his ideas seem well grounded. It is our opinion that a determined and prolonged effort by individuals and organisations who are working for clear understanding between the nations must inevitably end by eliminating present misconceptions.

Como Apreciar una película, by Jaime Potenze, in "Gente Joven" no 1, Sept. 6th 1949, Buenos Aires, Montevideo 850, 2o.

In the new and sympathetic review of the catholic Argentine youth, our friend Jaime Potenze has started a series of articles aiming at the initiation to cinematographic culture by this simple but instructive essay on the principles of film appreciation.

REVIEWS

REVUE INTERNATIONALE DE FILMOLOGIE. No 5, Vol. II. Published for the *Centre de Recherches Filmologiques de Paris* by Presses Universitaires de France, 92, Champs-Élysées, Paris.

The new issue of the *Revue Internationale de Filmologie* is evidence of the determination of its directors, particularly M. Gilbert Cohen-Séat, to run it as a strictly scientific publication, appealing to all who, the world over, are devoting themselves to research in the field of the analysis of the film as such. Once more we draw the attention of intelligent Catholics to the far-reaching consequences which are bound to ensue from such research, especially in connection with the cinema's social, spiritual and moral influence. Individual aloofness from a sphere as important as it is new is the abandonment in advance of any influence the christian ideal may exercise through the medium of film. Even now, the perusal of the articles published in the *Revue Internationale de Filmologie* brings awareness of a gap which it is the duty of Christian thought to fill. This in no way detracts from the interest of such contributions as Prof. Henri Wallon's study on "L'enfant et le Film" (Children and Films), or Cohen-Séat's "Le Discours Filmique" (The Film Speaks), or Pierre Francastel's "Espace et Illusion" (Space and Illusion). Drs. G. Heuyer, S. Lebovici and G. Amado publish the results of

an enquiry on mal-adjusted children and adolescents. The relationship between "Psychanalyse et Cinéma" (Psycho-analysis and the Cinema) is discussed by Dr. Serge Lebovici, and that between "Niveau mental et Compréhension du Cinéma" (Intelligence Quotient and Film Comprehension) by René Zazzo. Added interest comes from a series of brief notes and the text of a major international enquiry addressed to research workers throughout the world.

FILM WORLD. Monthly anthology of Audio-Visual matters. Ver Halen Publishing Co., 4067, Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, 28, Cal.

Amongst the main headings of this important anthology on the instructional film (in the fullest sense of the term) attention must be drawn to the section devoted to religious films (Church Section), which contains a great deal of information on the production and exhibition of films for religious instruction such as are often used for the illustration of services amongst the Protestant community. There is also much space devoted to Catholic activity in this sphere. Other sections deal with Education, Industry, Leisure and Television. Beginning with the November, 1949, issue, each number also publishes reviews of upwards of 100 educational films, with names and addresses of distributors.

BULLETIN of the National Committee for Visual Aids in Education. Monthly. 79, Wimpole St., London, W. 1.

More modest in appearance, this English publication also contains interesting reviews of educational films and articles of general interest. The September issue has an article by Caroline M. Mellers on the educational film in Germany. A report of local activities contains useful information on the work being done throughout the country. The reader receives the impression that the teachers of Great Britain have organised themselves with success.

SEQUENZE, Cahiers du Cinéma, edited by Luigi Malerba. No 1: "La Couleur dans le Film" (Colour in Film). No 2: "Les Réalisateurs parlent de Films" (Film-makers on Film). October, 1949. Parma (Italy), S. Bagio, 4.

This youthful Italian publication devotes its second number to a collection of the opinions of some major directors from various countries on the human, social and, above all, aesthetic and technical aspects of the Cinema.

FILMPOST ARCHIV, Manual of Production, Distribution and Exhibition. 2nd year, 1949. Verlag Film-post G. m. b. H., Frankfurt-on-Main Büdingen (Oberhessen), Germany.

The aim of this publication is the instruction of the public on new films and professional events. It is printed in a loose leaf format, so that classification of subjects is possible and reference becomes easy. The film reviews are detailed and do not ignore the moral aspect.

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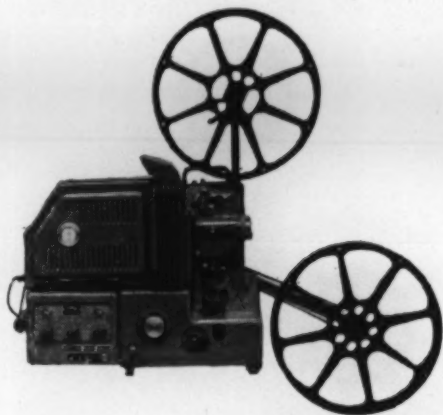
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